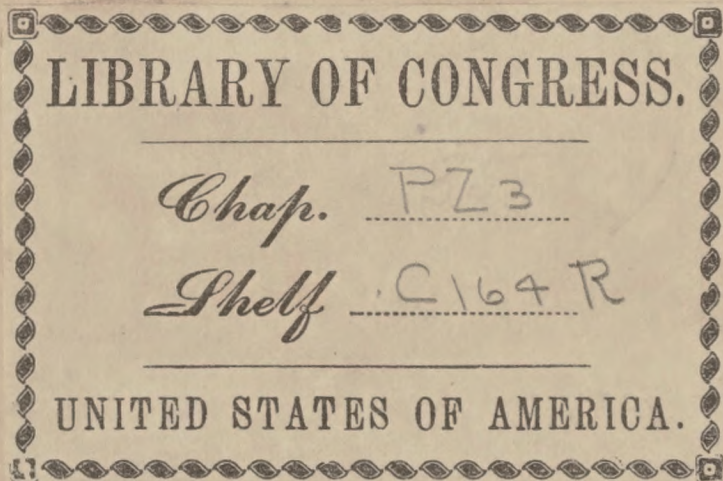


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RAVELLINGS

FROM THE WEB OF LIFE.

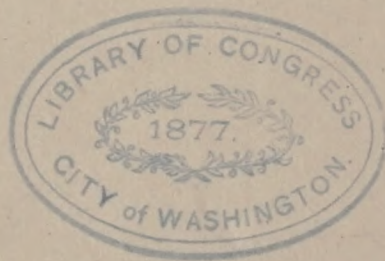
BY

GRANDFATHER GREENWAY.

(Charles James Cannon)

—•••—
The web of our life is of a mingled yarn.

SHAKSPEARE.
—•••—



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Myself and My Work.

I AM an old man—as the name by which I am generally known would imply—and something of an invalid; and, as a necessary consequence, have become almost a prisoner to my own room. Age and infirmity seemed to me, at first, very great evils, and I fretted beneath their infliction. My habits had been active, and my mind constantly engrossed in the pursuits in which I was engaged, and to be deprived at once of my customary exercise, and the business which had filled my mind to the exclusion of everything like serious thought, was certainly enough to try the patience of one who had very few pretensions to the character of a philosopher. But time works wonders. The confinement which—a little more than seven years ago—was hardly to be endured, has become positively pleasant to me, and much to be preferred to the busy, bustling life I had led till then, and I am now so accustomed to my rheumatism that I should be quite lost without it, for, besides putting me into undisputed possession of the easiest chair in the house, it affords an excellent subject for conversation—when everything else is exhausted.

When I first gave up business, my great want was occupation. I had read little but the newspapers, and the small type in which they were then beginning to print them—though the younger of my grand-daughters pretended there had been no change—rendered them almost useless to me, and, when I did succeed in mastering their contents, they served rather to irritate than to soothe, for

they constantly reminded me of scenes and occupations which I, alas! was never more to know; and so I banished them from my room.

I then began a course of historical reading. Of this, however, I very soon tired. History has been called "Philosophy teaching by example." But, as my object was amusement, and not instruction, I had not patience to toil along the barren road of tiresome dissertation, and dry generalities, for the sake of the unripe fruit that was to be gathered at the end of it. What the world calls History seemed to me little better than romance, and romance too of the dullest kind, in which the heroes and heroines were simply the embodiments of the odd fancies and peculiar prejudices of its writers, tricked out in the quaint costume of a bygone age, and bearing the names of certain persons who lived and loved, and suffered and died "a long time ago;" beings doubtless very much like ourselves—neither as good nor as bad as they are made to appear.

I next tried Philosophy. But, although she had been represented as transcendentally beautiful—is not Philosophy feminine?—she had either been greatly overrated, or my sight had become far worse than I thought, for, upon the word of an honest man, I did not find her even tolerably comely. Poetry was as little to my taste as Philosophy. Or, to speak more correctly, my taste for poetry was not perhaps of the right sort; for I could not, for the life of me, tell in what the "Iliad" was superior to "Chevy Chase;" I certainly preferred "Tam o' Shanter" to the "Inferno," and, like Irving's General, I was sure to fall asleep over the "Fairy Queen."

Yet the fault, after all, was neither in the historian, the philosopher, nor the poet. That lay nearer home. I had fancied, because I had had a boyish acquaintance with Homer and Virgil, with whom, however, I had long ceased to be on speaking terms; could read and write two or three modern languages, and had always commanded a certain degree of respect upon 'Change, that I was sufficiently educated to find in books a compensation for the pleasures of active life I was forced to give up. But in this I was mistaken. Books, to be really useful to us in age, must be made the chosen companions of our youth, and I, unfortunately, knew little of them until I had travelled pretty far down the hill of life, and

then they seemed determined to revenge themselves upon me for my long neglect, for they positively refused to lend me the aid I stood so much in need of.

But, besides religion:—It is Pope, I believe, who says, that “Beads and prayer books are the *toys* of age.” Had the little cynic better known their use he would not have called them “toys.” But, besides religion, as I said, I had still one resource against the weariness of idleness that threatened to devour me. I had always been, and still am fond of the society of the young. There is something so refreshing to the jaded mind in the purity of feeling gushing up from the heart, and flowing from the lips of those unhackneyed in the ways of the world, that I have at all times found pleasure in the conversation of persons of this description; and, in return, I suppose, for the indulgence with which I regard them, they have never failed to evince a decided partiality for my company. And in this I have found my advantage. My daughter’s family is altogether a most pleasant one, and her girls two of the very best in the world; yet, for all that, my evenings would be dull enough occasionally, but for the visits of Max Kopner and Frank Conway—two fine young fellows, whose fathers I knew when I was a boy, and whom I have known since they were as high as my knee—who seldom fail to drop in two or three times a week, and, by relating the gossip of the day, and discussing with Mrs. Eganton, my daughter—a woman of rare qualities, but who, from her early widowhood, has become almost as much a recluse as myself—and the girls, who go but little into society, everything connected with literature and the arts, have not only given me pleasure at the time, but supplied me with a fund of information that I could not otherwise have easily acquired.

But the visits of these lads have resulted in something better than an hour’s amusement for an old invalid. They have afforded me what is of infinitely greater value—actual occupation, the only food that can satisfy the hunger of the mind. And thus it was:

One of our party—Mrs. Eganton, I believe—suggested some time ago, that instead of taxing the good nature of Max and Frank, as we were in the habit of doing, by setting one or the other to read for us an hour or so of an evening, while she and the girls sat at work, we should endeavor to supply the place of the tales to which

we had given more time and attention, than the talent with which they were written, or the lessons they were intended to convey, would entitle them to, by telling stories of our own, that should depend for their interest more upon the facts they contained than the inventive powers of their narrators. This suggestion met with the instant approval of every one, not excepting Anastasia, who is so little fond of the sound of her own voice, that I have never known her to volunteer an anecdote, repeat a bit of scandal, or even discuss the bad taste in dress of her most intimate friends; and thereupon Kate, the younger of my grand-daughters—as mischievous a puss as ever frolicked at an old man's fireside—proposed that lots should be drawn, to decide who was to take the lead in this new amusement, with the anticipation of which she seemed perfectly delighted. So cutting six slips of paper, of unequal lengths, all of which, except the ends that were held between a finger and thumb, she carefully concealed in her hand, she bade us draw, saying that whoever drew the shortest should tell the first story, when—as, I am inclined to suspect, was intended—the lot fell upon Max Kopner.

And since—partly as an exercise of memory, and partly for want of something better to do—I have written out, in my best hand, the stories in the order in which they were related—dividing them into chapters, or sections, pruning away occasional redundancies, and now and then adding such embellishments as I thought the nature of the narratives would admit; when, upon completing my self-imposed task, I found I had brought together materials enow to make a volume—in manuscript—of a most imposing appearance, which, with the consent, if not entire approbation, of its authors, I resolved to put into print.

But then a difficulty arose about the title we should bestow upon it, no two of us agreeing, for a long time, upon any one of the many that were proposed. Mrs. Eganton thought that “Tales and Sketches” would be very appropriate, to which Frank Conway would have added, of “American Life.” Kate was for something more significant and high sounding, in which “Hearts” and “Mysteries” should hold a conspicuous place, but to both these words Max Kopner had a decided objection, for he had seen them so often and so badly used that he had become sick of them, and would re-

commend instead, "Phases of Every Day Life." I was for calling it "Thrums."

"'Thrums,'" repeated Kate. "'Thrums.' What," she asked, "does that mean?"

"You know, my dear," said I, "or rather you don't know, as you are city bred, that thrums are the ends of warp, which are left after the web is woven."

"And are cut off, I suppose, and thrown away."

"Cut off, certainly, but not thrown away—by economical people. When I was a boy—"

"That must have been a long time ago, grandpapa."

"Yes, Kate, a long time ago! But, as I was saying, when I was a boy, and lived in the country with my parents—it was before we had factories among us—everything we wore in the family was carded, spun, and woven at home, and my good thrifty mother, who never allowed anything to go to loss—you will never be like your great-grandmother, Kate—used to make her little folk, white and black, sit down by the kitchen fire in the winter evenings, and tie together the thrums she had saved through the year, out of which she knitted mittens and comforters for the poor of the neighborhood."

"Very praiseworthy it was, no doubt, of the good old lady," said the minx, with a saucy smile; "yet I cannot see the peculiar fitness of 'Thrums' as a title for our book."

"Why, you stupid little thing," said I, giving her a fillip on the cheek, "you must be blind not to see it. These stories, which to common observers—the Ingomars of the world—who want to know the *use* of everything, would seem as little worth as the thrums I have spoken of, yet when carefully collected, and tied together, as it were, by patient industry—"

"Would make good mittens and comforters, ha, grandpapa?"

Every one seemed amused with the ridiculous turn she had given to the argument I was about to enter upon, and, notwithstanding the strong inclination I felt to give the jade a sound box on the ear, I could not help joining in the laugh that had been raised at my expense.

Up to this time Anastasia had taken no part in the discussion; but being now appealed to, either to decide in favor of some one

of the titles proposed, or name a title herself, she answered, in her usual quiet way, .

"They are all very good and appropriate, but, with the exception of grandpapa's, a little hackneyed, and that, though admirable for its significance, I am afraid would not be generally understood. Would not," she asked, "'Ravellings from the Web of Life'—a title which, I believe, has never been used—obviate both these objections?"

The question with which she concluded, was unanimously answered in the affirmative, and so, as "RAVELLINGS FROM THE WEB OF LIFE," shall these stories go down to generations yet unthought of.

Guy Reybert.

MAX KOPNER'S STORY.

Repentance is a grace, but it is one
That grows upon deformity—fair child
To an unsightly mother!

SHERIDAN KNOWLES.

WHEN I first came to New York, I took board in one of those fine old mansions in Greenwich-street, near the Battery, which, having even then departed considerably from their original condition, as residences of our "merchant princes" and untitled nobility, have since quite lost all claim to respectability as well as nationality, and degenerated into foreign boarding-houses of rather questionable character. Here I was taken ill; and though my illness was not at any time thought serious, it was sufficient to keep me in the house for three mortal weeks, almost without companionship, and entirely without occupation of any kind; for, as I was suffering from a slight inflammation of the eyes, my physician would not permit me either to read or write.

It was the first time I had ever been left to the

company of my own thoughts, and wretchedly dull company I found them, I do assure you; for, as I had positively no knowledge of the world from observation, and very little more from books, I had never, I may say, been taught to think, and my efforts now to do what was so entirely new to me, were so feeble and ill-directed, that I found them altogether useless or unsatisfactory, and was soon glad to relinquish them, and seek a temporary relief from the tedium of confinement and inactivity in sleep. In fact, the stock of sleep I laid in during my short illness might, at a rough calculation, last a man of ordinary requirements something like three months.

But I could not sleep always, and, as a last resource against idleness—that dry-rot of the soul—I took to the laudable employment of noting the doings of my opposite neighbors, the occupants of one of a half-dozen small houses that had by some mischance been huddled together in the centre of a row of the highest pretensions. These were an old negro shoe-black and his pretty yellow wife, who lived in the cellar; a pleasant, bustling old woman, about as high as a barrel and as thick as a hogshead, who kept a small shop on the first floor, the windows of which were filled, without much regard to order, with apples, cakes, and candies, pins, tapes, and matches, picture-books and toys, with other articles too numerous and various to particularize; a fashionable dress and cloak maker in the second story, whose sign, dangling from one of the windows by a cord, was imperfectly seen from my place of observation, through the withered branches

of a sycamore, that had once thrown a pleasant shade upon the walk by which it was now uselessly encumbered, and a strange sort of being who, day and night, sat at a window of the attic, busily writing at a small table, or with his head leaning sadly upon his hand.

The negro and his wife served for a while to amuse me mightily. They evidently were, like too many of their betters, paired, but not matched. He was little, old, and ugly—a monkey in every thing but one—and she a decidedly handsome woman of the largest type. As a matter of course, he was jealous of her—not, perhaps, altogether without cause—and their hourly quarrels kept the neighborhood in an uproar from morning until night, and sometimes until late at night, and drew in front of the cellar every idle tatterdemalion who passed that way, much to the annoyance of the worthy Mrs. Classen, the fat old lady of the shop, with whose business they too often seriously interfered, by keeping at a distance the timid portion of her customers, who were among the genteeler children in that part of the street.

But after a short time I tired of this happy couple, and then, for a day or two, took to watching the ingoings and out-comings of the little customers of my fat friend, and those who bestowed their patronage upon the fashionable dress and cloak maker in the second story. It was, however, a vain endeavor to find amusement in this long, and I was fast sinking back into hopeless listlessness, when I fortunately be-thought me of the lonely being I had seen in the attic.

And lonely indeed he was! Not a living creature seemed ever to interrupt his employment, or rouse him from the long reveries into which he was so often sunk; but there he sat at his window, whenever I chanced to look across the street—at early morning, throughout the day, and far, far in the night—writing on, on, or buried in deep thought, and apparently neglectful of sleep and food, and indifferent to, or totally unconscious of, whatever was passing in the street below. My curiosity was greatly excited, and, in justice to myself, I will add, my pity too; for had not I for many days been a sufferer from loneliness? and I longed to know something of this man, whose isolated condition must have given him a peculiar claim to the sympathy of his kind. But none of my inquiries about him received a satisfactory answer. My landlady knew nothing of the people over the way. She kept a boy in the house to clean her gentlemen's boots and shoes; never bought any thing of the old woman, except now and then a paper of pins, or something of that kind; and had her dresses made in Park Place; so, of course, she could not know any thing about them. And Belinda—whose name I have since learned was Bridget—the girl who waited upon me during my illness, although she seemed to know every one else from Rector-street to the Battery, knew nothing of the only person in whom at that time I felt any interest.

My health being reëstablished, and the inflammation of my eyes entirely removed, I was allowed to return to business, and for several days the sight of

familiar scenes, and the performance of the duties of my situation, drove the lonely occupant of the garret quite out of my head; and I should probably have forgotten in a little while that such a being had ever existed, but for a report which reached me at breakfast one morning, that a man had just been found dead in the house opposite.

I started up and hurried across the street, and penetrating—not, however, without considerable difficulty—the living mass that blocked up the walk, and filled the *stoop*, the entry, and the stairs, worked my way up to the room where the dead man, like one in a pleasant sleep, was lying on a straw mattress upon the floor, decently wrapped in a dressing-gown of some dark stuff, that had evidently seen much service.

He was apparently not more than thirty-five, and, notwithstanding its emaciation, his face, even in the rigidity of death, would have been called handsome. His hair, of a light brown, intermingled with gray, that had become quite thin at the temples, was long, and so was his thick, manly beard, both of which curled a good deal; and his hands, now folded meekly upon his breast, would in size have satisfied the fastidiousness of a Byron. To a black cord about his neck was attached a locket of no great value, containing two curls of soft fair hair, but of different shades; on the little finger of his left hand was a plain gold ring, and by his side lay a large wooden crucifix, on which was represented, with painful distinctness, the mortal agony of a dying Saviour.

These things I noticed before the Coroner had completed his jury, after which I learned what follows from the testimony of Mrs. Classen, whose tenant he had been for something more than a year.

The room had been taken and handsomely furnished by an elderly lady for an invalid friend, whom she brought the next day in a carriage, but who refused to occupy it until all the furniture, except the mattress, a table, two chairs, a common glass lamp, and two or three other articles of positive use, was removed. He then entered into possession; and from that hour until the present had never been known to pass the street door, but commissioned Mrs. Classen to procure for him whatever he wanted, which, however, was not much—his bread and water—his only sustenance—pens, ink, and paper, and oil for his lamp, and whom he paid very liberally for her trouble. Nor did he receive any visitors except the lady already spoken of, who brought papers for him to copy, and came and took them away, and a small, thin old gentleman, who spoke very bad English, that had been to see him two or three times. He was a strange being, the old woman thought, living up there all alone, without the company of a fire even in the coldest weather, yet very gentle, and always grateful for any little service that she did him, and she had come to like him almost as much as if he were her own son.

“Every morning,” said the kind old creature, “I used to come up to see if he wanted any thing, and when I knocked at the door he would open it, just a little, and tell me whether he did or not. At other

times he rang if he wanted me. Yesterday morning, as usual, I came and knocked, but as he took no notice, I thought he might be still asleep, and so went down again very softly for fear of disturbing him. But when I found upon knocking this morning that he did not open the door, I thought I would open it myself, for it was never locked, and take a peep inside, when, behold! I saw him lying just as he is now. At first I thought he might be asleep; but, upon looking more closely, saw that he was dead, and I shall never forgive myself for not coming in yesterday, when, perhaps, he was still alive, and might, by a little timely assistance, have been saved from death for many a day to come."

I was much relieved by this account, and inwardly gave thanks to Heaven, that this poor wretch, weary as he must have been of existence, had not by his own act anticipated the time of his release, but had, according to the verdict of the Coroner's jury, "Died by the visitation of God."

The lady spoken of by Mrs. Classen having been sent for, now arrived. She exhibited neither surprise nor very deep sorrow, but only that decent seriousness which is always due to the presence of death; and as soon as the duty of the Coroner was performed, requested all present to withdraw. We did so; and the moment we were fairly outside of the door, she locked herself and the old woman in with the corpse, and admitted no one for the rest of the day but the undertaker and his men. At a very early hour the next morning a hearse and carriage were seen in front

of Mrs. Classen's shop; a plain coffin was brought out and placed in the former, followed by the two women, who were handed into the latter, and the funeral of the poor solitary moved on, and was soon out of sight of the few then astir in the neighborhood.

What I had learned served only as a whet, rather than a full meal, to my curiosity, and I was glad of the excuse afforded me two or three days after, by a bill on the house for "A room to let," of calling upon Mrs. Classen, from whom I hoped to gather some further information. And so I did, but in a way I little expected; for upon going up to look at the room, I saw some written sheets of paper lying loosely upon a table in the corner, which she said the friend of her late tenant had given her to kindle the fire with, and pretending to want them to line a box, I bought them of her for a couple of shillings, and found upon examination, that besides some spoiled copies of law papers, rough drafts of poems and scenes of a tragedy, they consisted of the leaves entire of a story, which was doubtless that of the writer himself.

I.

THE KEY NOTE.

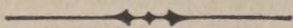
'Tis night;—deep night. The streets are empty; and no sound—save that of the wind rustling the few half dead leaves, which still cling, with the tenacity of human love, to the branches of the one poor lone tree in front of my dwelling—breaks the slumberous silence that weighs on all around. The cold autumnal moon is sailing slowly through a sea of clouds;—a sea that seems almost without ebb or flow, so sluggishly it moves;—and only at distant intervals does she cast a ray of melancholy light into the dull old chamber in which I am sitting, in utter loneliness and desolation of heart! And thus have I—day after day, and night after night—for weary, weary months, sat prayerfully waiting the coming of Him who alone can sunder the chains that bind me to the earth, and enable my spirit to mount above where THEY are now abiding. And yet he comes not. I thought I heard him near when the winds of March shook this old house until it rocked to its foundation. But no. And though the frequent and heavy showers of April, and the cold rains of May, that drenched the earth, and swelled the rivers until they overflowed their banks, brought him to many a hearth where his

presence was acknowledged with tears and lamentations, yet here, where he would have been most welcome, he came not.

Nor yet did he come with the summer;—a summer in which the Pestilence, like an army flushed with victory, rioted in our streets, striking down, in the midst of friends and dear relations, bold youth and lusty manhood and radiant beauty, while I, whose day of usefulness is past, who have no claim upon the kindness of a living creature, who have not even a dog that loves me, whose heart is withered ere my head has borne the blossoms of age, have been passed by unharmed. Unharmed? Ah, no, — unblest! Death will not have me of his company. But I will wait, and while I do so, let me, as some atonement for the follies and crimes I have committed, lay bare the secrets of my heart, and show, by the sketch of a life of much suffering, although of few vicissitudes, how little it is in the power of man, when once he has opened the floodgates of evil within him, to stem the torrent of passion that will then set in upon him. HE alone can do that who gave to the seas their bounds, and hushed with a word the tumult of winds and waves.

But, before I proceed with my story, let me be perfectly understood. I do not think I was of *necessity* a monster. I do not claim to have been differently constituted from other men; that my temptations have been greater than theirs, or my strength to resist them less; although the time has been when I thought otherwise. When writhing under the lash of

an avenging conscience, and using the language of the first murderer—"My punishment is greater than I can bear"—I have added, in a spirit of rebellion against the justice of Heaven, "and more than I have deserved, for, in yielding to my evil propensities, I did only that which it was not in my power not to do." I am wiser now; and acknowledge with a bowed and chastened heart, that all the errors and sufferings of my life have sprung—not from any weakness peculiar to my nature—but from a foolish contempt of danger, and an undue estimation of my own strength. And there are not many who have sinned, that could not—if they would take pains to know themselves well—make the same admission.



II.

THE ORPHAN.

THE summer of 18— was not unlike that which is just past. Then, too, the Destroying Angel, but under a name different from that he lately bore, with fear for his precursor and death following where he passed, swept over the city; and almost every one that could, fled at his approach. But, beside the poor, who were unable to leave, a few of better faith or stronger nerves, were content to remain; and among these was Sally Jessup, the keeper of a small

retail shop in an obscure street, which was now so seldom trodden that the grass began to show itself among its broken pavements. She had never been married. But the state of "single blessedness" in which she had passed full fifty years of her life, unfavorable as it is supposed to be to the development of the kindlier feelings of her sex, had yet had no bad effect either upon her temper or her heart; for she was uniformly cheerful, and no one was ever known to appeal to her sympathies in vain. This was proven in one instance, at least, at no trifling risk, and with a deal of inconvenience to herself.

A little boy, his face blubbered with crying, although he knew not why he cried, came to her one morning in the midst of the pestilence, to tell her his father was dying, and that his mother begged she would come to her, if but for a moment; and, without waiting to take counsel with prudence, or her fears, she went at once. But the man was already dead; and the new-made widow was fast losing the consciousness of her great loss, in the delirium of fever.

"My boy! my poor, poor Guy!" exclaimed the dying woman, when, as the death-struggle began, her reason became once more clear, "what will become of him!"

"Don't, Mrs. Reybert, dear, don't trouble yourself about the child," said the kind-hearted spinster, who, with the devotion of a sister, had attended at the bedside of the sufferer from the hour she had been summoned, "for while Sally Jessup has bread to eat or a

roof to shelter her, he shall not want a friend or a home."

She kept her word; and from that hour the orphan boy of her poor neighbors became the child of her adoption. I was that boy. But further than what I have told, I know nothing of my parents, who were always spoken of, however, by my protectress as very excellent people, who had never been so fortunate as they deserved to have been. The grounds for her belief in their worthiness and misfortunes I never knew. Perhaps she had not any; and all the kind things she said of them might have been suggested only by her wish to gratify the pardonable vanity of one ambitious of tracing his origin to a respectable, at least, if not a distinguished source.

III.

A WISH AND ITS REALIZATION.

SALLY JESSUP was not a native of the city, and she never wearied—although not generally garrulous—when the business of the day was over, our frugal supper dispatched, and we sat cosily together by the fire in her neat little parlor, of talking of her girlish days and the pleasantness of her early home in the country; and what seemed to be the one cherished wish of her unambitious heart, was to rest in her old

age under the roof which had sheltered her in infancy. This wish was at length gratified; for finding that the house where she was born, and a few acres around it, which upon the death of her only brother had passed into the hands of strangers, were now for sale, she cheerfully parted with the hoardings of many years to make herself mistress of them, and returned, as she said, to lay her bones among her own people. But the gratification of this innocent and natural wish—the source, too, of much happiness to a heart most moderate in its desires—unimportant as it may seem to have been, was not without its effect upon the future of my fate, by diverting the current of my life from the course in which it would otherwise have flowed, had I been forced in my youth to mingle in the busy scenes of a crowded city.

To one weary of or disgusted with the world, no retreat could have been better suited than the new home to which I was taken when in—what I believe must have been—about my eleventh year. The house—a very old one for an American house—was, like most of its class, a plain wooden structure of a single story, with high-pointed roof and covered piazzas or *stoops*, both front and rear, the whole width of the building, which for protection against the storms of winter and the intense heat of our northern summers, had been built almost at the bottom of a deep hollow, formed by hills that seemed but younger members of the great “Green Mountain” family to which they belonged, and by which it was so hidden that, although within a quarter of a mile of a well-

travelled turnpike, its existence by the wayfarer would never have been thought of. In the rear, and covering the side of one of those hills, was an apple orchard, many of the trees of which, though still vigorous, were beginning to show marks of age; on one side was the garden, kept less for ornament than use; on the other, the barn, the corn-crib, hen-roost, smoke-house, sty, &c.; and in front of the unpretending mansion lay the few acres that constituted, what might be properly called, the farm of Sally Jessup.

Yet, although every thing in reality about her home remained nearly as she had left it, thirty odd years before, nothing seemed to its mistress any longer the same. The hills that enclosed it had lost much of their grandeur; the orchard was less extensive, and the trees had a gnarled appearance and a look of old age; the mulberry tree in the garden was dead, and so, too, was the plum, whose whitened branches still hung over the well, and the currant bushes were past bearing; while the Nipmoosh, that rippled along the garden fence, and through the small meadow in front of the house, had shrunk, from a respectable stream, to a brook of the most miserable pretensions. But the changes within the house were greater even than those without. The badly-lighted rooms were smaller than they had been; the wainscots were dark with age and smoke, and the heavy beams, which crossed the unplastered ceilings, were now so low that Sally, by no means a very tall woman, always walked under them with a stoop, as if afraid of knocking her head against them.

"How altered since I saw it last!" said the good lady with a half sigh. There was, indeed, a change; but it was in herself. The old woman could not now see things with the eyes of her girlhood.

"But we must make the best of it," she continued, with returning cheerfulness; and going to work with a determination "to make the best of it" she soon succeeded in effecting the necessary change. The superfluous branches of the apple trees were lopped; the dead mulberry and plum were no longer suffered "to cumber the ground," and the unproductive currant bushes were grubbed up, and their places supplied with others, while a plot was stolen from the vegetables in the garden, and a few flowers planted in their stead. The interior of the old house also underwent a thorough renovation. The windows were enlarged, the walls and ceilings painted white, and the heavy old furniture packed away in the garret, to make room for that which was newer in pattern, and lighter and more graceful in appearance. Indeed, hardly any thing remained as it had been thirty odd years before; yet when Sally Jessup looked around upon her improvements, she said with a smile of satisfaction, "Ah! things are at last as they used to be!"

IV.

THE PREDICTION.

WHAT plans my benefactress had formed for me, I do not know; but she certainly could not have intended me for a farmer, for, except in assisting to get in the hay, gather the apples, or husk the corn, I was never asked, nor apparently expected, to take upon me any portion of the labor of the farm; but when I was not at school—which was about the half of every year—I was allowed to waste my time just as the whim of the moment prompted, in reading the few books in our scanty library, or such as could be borrowed of the neighbors, or in wandering abroad among the woods and hills of the surrounding country.

But, with the exception of “Paradise Lost” and the “Seasons,” an odd volume of Shakspeare, the writings of Burns, and two or three other poets less known to fame, my reading was not of a kind to add much to my small stock of knowledge, or greatly to improve either my understanding or my heart;—novels and romances that set all truth and even probability at defiance, from which every thing like nature was excluded as low, and in which love, the all-engrossing subject of their pages, was elevated into a god or transformed into a demon. But if reading like this was little conducive to health or strength of

mind, my idle wanderings among the woods and hills were as little conducive to bodily health. One filled with the passions of manhood the breast of youth, and the other enervated the body, they should have strengthened, by the indulgence they afforded for profitless dreamings, and by fostering a spirit of discontent with the humble condition in which I had been placed by the arbitrariness of fortune. Yet so long as I showed a fondness for books, and no fondness, but rather a disrelish, for the company of boys of my own age, the simple-minded Sally believed every thing to be right, and left me uncontrolled and unquestioned to the indulgence of my humor.

Wild dreams and vague desires had long made me dissatisfied with my position; and dissatisfaction with the present rendered me impatient for the future, and I sought to anticipate the revelations of time, by means common to the ignorant in all ages,—that is, by consulting one who was supposed to possess more knowledge of coming events than could have been lawfully come by. I went to a Fortune Teller,—a miserable crone, whose youth must have been past before the breaking out of the war of the Revolution, who burrowed in a wretched hut a couple of miles from Nipmoosh Hollow, and lived by the superstitious folly of the country-people,—from whom I was to learn my fate. This I now know was folly. But how should I have been wiser then than my neighbors, or my kind benefactress, who had seen so many more years than I, who firmly believed in the predictions of the Witch of the Plains?

It would be foolish here to repeat all that I was told by this old woman. One thing only, from the power I have been weak enough to allow it to exercise upon the happiness of my life, I will relate: which was, that, before the going down of the sun that day, I was to see the being who was for good or evil to influence my fate.

I had been accompanied by a lad of about my own age, the only boy I ever made even a temporary companion, who, when we reached the "bars" where I was to leave the turnpike for the foot-path that led down to the Hollow, said with a laugh as we separated,

"Your time's short, Guy. The sun's behind the pines already, and in less than a quarter of an hour will be clean gone."

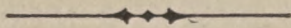
"Greater interests than ours, Warren, have been decided in less time than that," I returned gayly, and was about to spring over the fence, when my attention was attracted by the loud tones and merry laughter of a party of equestrians that was coming up the road.

It consisted of three gentlemen and two ladies, all of a decided *uncountry* look, particularly the latter, who, from the strong likeness between them, were evidently mother and daughter, of the respective ages of forty and sixteen. Both were good horsewomen; but not equally good; for while the elder sat and managed her animal with the ease of a woman reared in the country, but with infinitely more grace than any mere country-woman I had ever seen, the younger,

though without the least awkwardness, did not show the same self-possession. The former was an uncommonly fine woman, in the full meridian of her beauty, with perhaps a slight dash of the man in her bearing, and the latter a slight girl of the most exquisite loveliness.

Just as they were passing, the younger lady dropped her whip, and the gentleman nearest to her stopped, and was about to dismount to recover it; but before he could do so, I had jumped from the fence and returned it to her. She received it with a bow, and a smile that revived the decaying splendors of the hour, when thanking me in a voice of the most enchanting melody, she rode on with the rest, and, by a turn in the road, was soon hidden from my sight.

She took the daylight with her.



V

LOVE IN IDLENESS.

THE books, in which I had hitherto delighted, now no longer afforded me pleasure; but my love of solitude, becoming every day greater, grew at last into a passion so strong, that any thing which interfered with the indulgence of it was regarded as a positive evil. Even the hours absolutely necessary for food and rest, were most grudgingly given, for then the

fairy realm in which I wandered when alone, I was forced to abandon for the dull realities of life, and my one companion of the woods and hills for the mere men and women of this sordid world. And what a realm was that from which I was so painfully withdrawn! And what a companion was she so reluctantly left behind! It is true, that to the unanointed eye, my favorite haunt was nothing more than a solitary dingle embosomed among the hills, for whose protection the arms of mighty trees were interlaced, and upon which the heavens were ever looking smilingly and lovingly down. But to me it was a garden more beautiful than Eden, in the midst of which arose a palace of porphyry and gold; and among the flowers of that garden, and through the halls of that gorgeous palace, did I walk for happy, happy hours, hand in hand with a being of indescribable loveliness, whose gentle eyes were fondly raised towards mine, and whose whispered accents of endearment sunk deep into my heart, as refreshing dews sink into the cup of the flower. Garden and palace were the creations of fancy, but to memory was I indebted for the companionship of her whose beauty was to my soul a perpetual joy.

But my garden became suddenly a waste; my glorious palace, by a power more potent even than time, was crumbled into dust, and the companion of my wanderings rudely torn from my side. The dream of months was at an end, and, without preparation, was I suddenly brought face to face with the REAL. Death had entered the old house in the Hollow, and I was

once more an orphan, some years older, it is true, than when my parents had been taken from me, yet little less helpless. Sally Jessup was dead; had died without the premonitions of sickness, and intestate; and the little property to which she had always told me I should succeed, was taken possession of by her administrator and nearest of kin, and I was obliged to seek a new home.

Heaven forbid that I should plant a nettle on the grave of the kindest and most disinterested of human beings. Whatever she did for me was done for my happiness, and whatever she left undone was for my comfort or convenience. She had no thought but how she could best gratify my peculiar tastes or fancies at the time. But the very love of my kind benefactress has been to me a curse; for it was that love which, when I should have been abroad, strengthening the body by healthful labor in the fields, or storing my mind with useful knowledge at home, suffered me to waste my time in enervating idleness and foolish dreams, or in poring over books that were destructive alike of mental vigor and purity of heart. Yet even this mistaken kindness might have been less hurtful in its effects, had now and then a grain of religious knowledge been dropped into the fallow mind of childhood. But, unhappily, religion was a thing with which this excellent woman, so good by nature, was wholly unacquainted; and to weeds, that looked like flowers, was left the soil in which no good seed had been sown.

VI.

A STEP FORWARD.

THERE was no unkindness in the tone, nor do I think there was any unkindness in the heart of Mr. Allen, the successor of Sally Jessup, when he intimated to me the necessity of seeking a new home. He was a prudent, hard-working man, whose children had been carefully brought up in habits of industry, and, as I was likely to prove little better than a drone in the domestic hive, it was not to be expected that I should live in idleness at the expense of others. It was right that I should seek a new home, and being now eighteen, at least, and well grown, learn to do something for myself. But where was that home to be sought; and what, with my utter ignorance of every thing like business, was I to do in it for my support when found?

“I will return,” said I, “to the place of my birth; and by the exercise of whatever talent God has endowed me with, earn for myself a present livelihood, and fortune it may be, or even worldly consideration, in the future.” This resolution formed, I hastened to act upon it; and bidding adieu to the grave of my second mother, and sending my trunk on by a wagon to the place at which I was to take the steamboat, I turned my back forever upon Nipmoosh Hollow, and

began my journey towards the metropolis on foot.

It was a lovely October morning, bright and cool; and the few miles I had to walk, before I could be taken up by the stage, seemed rather a pleasant exercise than the first serious essay in the great business of life; and when, in passing through a mountain gorge, I saw the newly-risen sun, like a globe of fire, fill the whole open space before me, I regarded it as an omen of the glory that was one day to fill my path, and went on my way with a heart as light as my footsteps.

But my spirits, so buoyant before, fell rapidly as I approached the city; and when I found myself in its crowded streets, where, among the thousands who jostled me on every side, I saw not one friendly or familiar face, they sank almost to the point of despair. Then, for the first time in my life, did I feel what is meant by *solitude*, to which, although I had for years been a daily wanderer by myself among woods and hills, I had hitherto been a stranger. The weight of the heavy future fell at once upon my heart, and, whatever might have been its native energies, they seemed for the time and forever crushed beneath it. Tears would at that moment have been a great relief, but the pride of young manhood forbade them to flow, and, with the air of one who at every step expects to encounter an enemy, I pursued my way alone.

VII.

THE FIRST WRONG STEP.

It is not by the great trials of life that the power of endurance in man is ever so truly tested, as by those petty annoyances with which, like briers in his path, he becomes entangled in his journeyings through the wilderness of this world. Many a brave spirit who could have borne without shrinking the torments of martyrdom, has become impatient of the sting of an insect; and for my own part, I think I could have met with greater equanimity what all would admit to be positive afflictions, than the sordid cares and daily irritations of years of struggle with narrow means and untoward circumstances, until by unflagging industry I had risen to a partnership in a respectable mercantile house, into which I had been admitted in a very humble capacity indeed.

From the day of my arrival in the city, my greatest ambition had been to create for myself a home, in which I should at length find the kindness and sympathy for which my spirit yearned; and when, at the age of twenty-five, I really became the possessor of one I could call my own, I said confidently to myself, "Now will I be happy!" And happy I might have been, had I only subjected to reason the impulses of a wayward and undisciplined heart.

The one I had chosen to share with me my home was a fair gentle girl, barely eighteen, who had, like me, been an orphan from her childhood, but who, unlike me, was still happy in the possession of the friend who had, with the care of a tender mother, watched over her from that time until the present. This was the sister of her father, a widow lady without children, whose quiet cheerfulness was not likely to detract from the comfort of the domestic circle which she was now invited to join, and whose practical knowledge would supply what was wanting in the experience of Agnes in the management of her household.

But in marrying for a home, I committed one serious error, was guilty of one most grievous sin of omission. Believing I had overcome the fancy of my boyhood, I did not look sufficiently deep into my heart, to know if any abiding affection was there for the fair girl whose lot I had indissolubly linked with mine; and it was not until months after I had become a husband, that the truth was fully revealed to me, that I cherished no feeling for my wife which could deserve the name of *love*. I admired her beauty, respected her virtues, and was grateful for the efforts she made in her own quiet way to render me happy. But the love that would have regarded with indifference the loss of personal charms; that would have excused her faults—if faults she had—or turned those very faults into virtues; that would have borne with firmness the loss of all earthly comforts for her sake, I had not; and the mere *liking*, with which I foolishly hoped to supply its place, was but a poor foundation

whereon to rear a structure, that should withstand the storms to which all human happiness is exposed.

Nor was this my only error. Another, and one hardly less serious, was that I committed in urging Mrs. Ryland to break up her own family, and become permanently a part of mine. For many years had this lady supplied to Agnes the place of father and mother, and the grateful heart of the young orphan had given her, in return for her care, the full amount of that love which her parents had not lived to claim. The influence she therefore possessed over the mind of her niece—a mind she may be said originally to have formed—must have been very great; and, without pausing to inquire how far that influence was likely to clash with what, as a husband, I might reasonably hope to exercise over my wife, I took the most certain way of perpetuating it, by bringing her into my house. But as it was an error of judgment and not of the will, I cannot even now blame myself very severely for it.

VIII.

GATHERING CLOUDS.

THREE years now passed, during which, if not positively happy, I was at least reasonably contented with my lot, for I was in the enjoyment of good

health and a prosperous business, and I still found the beauty of my wife, which was every day maturing into more perfect loveliness, gratifying to my pride, and her child-like simplicity of character a subject of pleasing contemplation. Yet, if the truth must be told, there were times when I would have given all her beauty, and much of her real worth, to have found in her a more appreciative spirit. That she loved me, as much as it would seem lawful for one of her strong religious feelings to love a mere creature, I do not doubt; but our tastes were hardly in any thing the same, and I was not sure that she always understood me; and I am ashamed to own how impatient, if not more than impatient, I oftentimes felt at the little interest she manifested in subjects to which I attached great, it may have been undue, importance, and to mark with what indifference she listened to the passages I occasionally read to her from my favorite authors. Yet, if some have been happier, few I am convinced ever had juster grounds for content than I in those three years of my married life, for had I not a friend in Mrs. Ryland, a true and loving wife in Agnes, and in my boy, my darling Willie, an object of present delight, and of hope for the years to come? Yes, these I *had*: alas! what have I now?

At the end of those three years, the latent evil of my nature was first developed, and the low mutterings of the storm, that was to wreck my peace forever, began to make themselves heard. But of the one I was as unconscious as I was deaf to the other. I was

too much engrossed with the world without to take much heed of that within. I had become an author; and the praises bestowed upon my book, by the makers of reputations in the small circle in which I moved, gratified a vanity never difficult to excite, and introduced me to the acquaintance of persons whose notice I felt it an honor to be able to claim, but whose example, to one so weak of purpose as I, could be nothing less than ruinous. By that example was I led, night after night, to leave my quiet home and the companionship of those who loved me, for places of idle amusement and literary *réunions*, where the senses were charmed and the intellect sharpened, but the heart rendered intensely selfish, and the moral sense most sadly perverted; and by that example, too, did I learn to raise without scruple the wine cup to my lips, and look without shuddering upon orgies in which the reason of man is brought below the instinct of the brute.

Now it was that the error I had committed in bringing Mrs. Ryland into my family made itself apparent. Had I been alone with Agnes, the sense of her entire dependence upon me for companionship, must, I think, have kept me at home at times when business engagements did not furnish a reasonable pretence for going abroad; and her gentleness could hardly have failed to win me back to the path from which I was wandering. But having her aunt always with her, I made myself believe that she did not really need my company, and that I was therefore at liberty to consult my own pleasure or convenience only in the disposal

of my evenings; and whenever I did that which I knew to be wrong, I had not only to endure the upbraidings of my own heart—severe enough at times, Heaven knows—and the reproaches of the unspoken sorrow of my poor wife, but the sharp, though generally indirect rebukes of Mrs. Ryland, who, mild and forgiving where she alone was the sufferer, was hot in resentment of any thing done to the injury of her niece, which kept me in a state of constant irritation, and ready at all times to give way to the evil temper that had of late become my daily companion. But the end was not yet.

IX.

A VISION OF THE PAST.

FROM my known acquaintance with dramatic literature, and fondness for the theatre, I came to be regarded by many of my associates as something of a judge in matters relating to the stage, and whenever a new actor appeared, or a new play was brought out, I was sure to make one of a party to decide for the public upon their respective merits, and I can honestly say that I never used the power of the critic ungenerously. One night I made one of a party of this kind, for the purpose of welcoming back an actress, who had gone from among us poor and comparatively un-

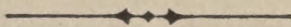
known, but was returning rich in fame and fortune, which had been won as much by her beauty as the wonderful talents she was allowed to possess.

Having procured tickets in the morning, we joined the crowd in front of the theatre quite early in the afternoon, and, though the heat was oppressive, and the noise and confusion any thing but pleasant, remained patiently together until the doors were opened, when, availing ourselves of our knowledge of the house, we made our way without much difficulty to our customary places in the pit.

The theatre was filled almost as soon as opened, and before the first note of the music was heard, there was not a vacant square foot within its walls; for even the lobbies were crowded by those who, if they could not see, hoped they might at least catch the tones of that voice which had already thrilled the hearts of uncounted thousands. Yet the inconvenience—not to say suffering—of hundreds of human beings, wedged together into one solid mass, was borne without a murmur by that multitude of anxious expectants, who seemed to forget every thing but to behold the divinity of the hour.

The play was "Fazio," a work of no great literary merit, but quite a favorite with certain actresses, for the opportunities it affords for the delineation of the two great passions of love and jealousy; and as the heroine appears in the first scene, all hands were ready to applaud the moment the curtain drew up, and discovered Bianca sitting at work in the laboratory of her husband. My hands were ready, too, but

I did nothing to swell the thunder which at that moment shook the building, for a sudden faintness came over me, and my hands fell powerless at my sides. Could I be awake, or had, indeed, the vision of my boyish fancy become reality, and was here to bless or to curse me? Full twelve years had passed since the incident of the road which I have related, and the slight figure and girlish face were changed to those of the beautiful and perfectly-developed woman; but ere the first tones of that too well remembered voice fell upon my ear, I was convinced that, in the world-renowned actress before me, I saw the being to whom I had foolishly rendered up all the affections of my boyish heart.



X.

THE PREDICTION VERIFIED.

THAT night I made the acquaintance of the actress, who, I was flattered to find, remembered, with the distinctness of one who had often made it the subject of pleasing thought, the trifling incident of the whip, and from that moment the passion of my boyhood, with all its early strength, and more than all its early fervor, returned, and I yielded to it without reserve every power of my mind and every faculty of my soul. For days, and weeks, and months I attended her like her shadow, seemed to live but in her pres-

ence, and for her sake trod madly under foot every social and moral obligation, and became wilfully deaf to the calls of duty, the reproaches of conscience, and the voice of wronged affection. The admonitions of friends and the sneers of enemies, the serious remonstrances of my partners, the bitter remarks of Mrs. Ryland, the fading cheeks and silent tears of my wife, and even the looks of fear, if not of hate, in the baby face of my little Willie, all failed to restore me to reason for a single hour, for the poison of unholy passion had become mingled with the very current of my life, and all healthful action was destroyed alike in heart and brain. Yet, as I felt myself sinking in the esteem of my friends, aye, and even in my own, I assumed to all around me a demeanor of haughtiness, as if I would command the outward respect of those who I knew must inwardly despise me.

At length my partners, finding all their efforts to win me back to duty unavailing, would not suffer me to remain any longer with them, and they, who had so kindly encouraged my early industry, and generously rewarded my probity with their confidence, and a respectable share of the business they had been years in building up, now thrust me out from among them with anger and ignominy. This circumstance, which a few months before would have crushed me to the earth, I now regarded as an act of gross injustice, and as such resented it with unseemly violence and unmanly insult; and to show how little I regarded it, I went at once to join a party of friends—as I called them, in the language of the world—to dine at a

fashionable hotel, with whom I afterwards adjourned to the theatre, to bask in the light of that beauty which was then shedding its radiance upon admiring hundreds, but which shone in an especial manner upon me, for were not my last expensive gifts worn ostentatiously upon the lovely throat and polished arms of my divinity? I then accompanied her and her mother to her house, where, with a select few, I had been invited to sup, from which, at a late hour, worn down with excitement, I returned to my own home.

Contrary to what I had expected, I found Agnes in the parlor, and, without noticing how she was employed, began to rate her harshly for disobeying my oft-repeated command—never to wait up for me. But she raised herself from the sofa over which she had been bending, and confronted me with an air of scorn and defiance. The trodden worm had turned at last, and, waving me from her, she hissed through her clenched teeth,

“Beastly reveller! come not here to disturb the dying moments of my angel boy! Back to the sty in which you have been wallowing, and profane not this holy place with your accursed presence! Begone!”

Her words fell like fire upon my brain, and, in a moment of frenzy, I turned and obeyed.

Without knowing, and indeed without at all caring what I did, or whither I was going, I sought again the house of the actress, who was still up, though the last of her guests must have been some time gone, and her mother—the dragon that had always stood between me and the golden fruit I coveted—no doubt

asleep. She looked surprised at my entrance, but received me with her usual kindness, and expressed a hope that no accident had happened to occasion this unexpected, and certainly not very seasonable visit. What my immediate reply was I do not know. The first I now remember is, that I found myself upon my knees before her, declaring the intensity of my passion, for which I had sacrificed good name and prosperity, domestic peace and the welfare of my soul, and imploring her to fly with me from a place which must evermore be hateful to me.

“Fool!” said she, with a look of withering scorn, as she tore herself from my grasp, “could you think, because I have been tolerant of your follies for the sake of your usefulness, that I would throw myself away upon a creature like you? The thought is an insult. Rise, sir, and leave this house, or I will have you thrust into the street like a dog!” I rose and staggered forth, and as I heard the door slammed after me, fell senseless upon the pavement.

XI.

FANTASIES.

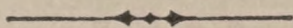
A HORRIBLE darkness was above and around me. The earth trembled and heaved as in the throes of an earthquake; the thunders of Heaven were answered by thunders that rolled beneath my feet, while forked

lightnings, like fiery serpents, darted across my path, and twined around me at every step. Destruction threatened me on every side; for the Demon of the Storm had come abroad in all his terrors, and wherever he passed, the mightiest works of man's hands—the princely palace and majestic temple—were levelled with the dust; and so, with terrible sounds ringing in my ears—shrieks, and groans, and hisses, and shouts of mocking laughter—I fled howling on beyond the city's bounds, and on beyond the habitations of my kind, until I entered upon a plain that seemed to spread out before me a limitless ocean of sand.

And over that plain for days, and weeks, and months, without sleep, without food, without even a drop of water to cool my hot and swollen tongue, with those same sounds still ringing in my ears, I toiled, while a burning sun, that never set, glared on me from a dull red sky, and the sands were to my unprotected feet like ashes new fallen from a glowing furnace.

But, lo! the sea, the ever glorious sea, met at length my longing eyes, and, with a shout of joy, I rushed forward to throw myself into its coveted embrace. Alas! in a moment of wildest commotion, it had been frozen into stone, and I fell upon its icy and jagged bosom bruised and stunned. And there I hoped my miseries would forever end. But no. A power within, that I could not resist, goaded me onward, and, weak and bleeding, I rose to climb its glittering heights, only to be precipitated into depths beyond the reach of light.

But the shore was gained at last; and I soon found myself in a beautiful meadow covered with the soft grass of spring, and sprinkled all over with delicate blue and white, and golden and purple flowers, surrounded by trees that waved and rustled in the morning air, while among their branches hopped and twittered innumerable birds, to whose innocent hearts was existence happiness enough. Here, overcome by fatigue and long suffering, I lay down and slept, and slept so soundly that I did not even dream.



XII.

REVELATIONS

WHEN I awoke, the scene was altogether changed. I was lying upon a bed in a darkened room, and by my side was seated an elderly female in the habit of a Sister of Charity, who rose as I looked up at her, and kindly raising my head, by putting one hand under my pillow, held to my lips a cup containing a most delicious beverage.

"Where am I?" I asked, as she laid me gently down.

"Among friends," she answered cheerfully.

"But in what country?"

"In your own country, and in your own city."

After lying still a few minutes, for I was quite too

weak to say more than a few words at a time, I again asked,

"Is there any one here who knows me?"

"Yes, Guy, I am here," answered some one coming up from the foot of the bed. It was Mrs. Ryland.

"And Agnes? Is not she, too, here?"

"Agnes is not here—at present."

"Come," interposed the Sister, with a smile, "we must have no more talk just now." And thereupon Mrs. Ryland fell back to the foot of the bed; the Sister resumed her seat, and I again sank into a deep sleep, during which the Sister gave up her place to Mrs. Ryland, whom I found sitting by me when I next awoke.

I was glad of this; for as there was much I was most anxious to know, I felt it would be easier to question her alone than in the presence of a stranger.

"What place is this?" I asked, for I knew I was not at home.

"St. Vincent's Hospital," she answered, with evident reluctance.

"How came I here?"

"You had met with an accident in the street, and were brought here by the charitable gentleman who picked you up, because he did not know where else to take you."

"Is it long since?"

"About ten months."

"So long! Then I have been very ill?"

"Very."

"But you have not been with me all that time?"

"Not all. You had been here some weeks before I knew it, for I was very much engaged about that time; but since I found you, I have been here a good deal."

"And Agnes? Has she not been here sometimes?"

"It is forbidden," she said, evading the question, "for you to talk much at a time; so now try and sleep again."

"There is something," I said, earnestly, "that you would keep from me. But I must know it. Agnes has not been able to forgive me—how, indeed, could she?—and therefore has not been to see me."

"Agnes was too good a Christian, too loving a wife, not to forgive whatever wrongs she may have received at the hands of her husband."

"*Was?* Gracious Heaven! what is this? Is Agnes *dead?*"

"She has passed from a life of pain and sorrow," she answered solemnly, but with a trembling voice, "to one of eternal joy!"

"O, my boy! my poor, poor Willie!" I said, when my tears permitted me to speak, "how will the sadness of thy sweet young face upbraid the father whose crimes have made thee motherless!"

"He will never upbraid you, Guy."

"Then he, too, is dead?"

She bowed her head, and answered with her tears.

XIII.

CONCLUSION.

SLOWLY and painfully, very, very slowly and painfully, passed the time until I was sufficiently restored to leave the hospital, for the mind, deprived of other occupation, would dwell upon what was afflicting in the past, particularly upon the death of my wife and child, which, though attributed by the world to scarlet fever, that had cut them off within three weeks of each other, I felt to be my work; for, had I not criminally neglected them when the disease first appeared in my boy, its progress might have been checked, and the insidious enemy without much difficulty defeated. Instead of which—— But why dwell upon this now? God did not neglect them if I did; and His love and care were shown for them, by calling them home to his own eternal dwelling-place, where pain is never felt and sorrow has no name.

I was at length pronounced well, and at liberty to quit the hospital. But whither was I to go? The savings of years had been thrown away, and the house, which I had once thought would be the shelter of my old age, had been sold to satisfy a claim that I had suffered to remain against it, and I was about to be sent back into the world without money and without a home. But Mrs. Ryland, who had so long as-

sisted in the care of me, did not now forsake me. With the readiness of one who had received nothing but kindness from him who had wounded her so deeply, through the object of her dearest affections, she offered to share with me her little fortune. This, of course, I could not do otherwise than refuse; but begged, instead, that she would obtain something by which, without again venturing into the ways of temptation, I might earn enough to supply the wants of one whose life should be thenceforth in contrast with his days of reckless waste and sinful self-indulgence. She did so. And to her active charity am I indebted for the little happiness I can still enjoy—the happiness of being independent.

'Tis very strange! For three nights, and at the same hour, have I heard music—not in the dark and silent street below, nor from any house in the neighborhood, for it came not until the lamp of the last watcher was extinguished—but in the air. The first it came from a distance, seemingly as far as the river; the second it was nearer, not farther from me than the width of the street, yet above me; and now it seems just outside of my window. What can it mean? Is it, as I fondly hope, an intimation from above, that the sacrifice of a contrite heart has been accepted; that the long struggle is nearly over, and the weary spirit shall find peace at last?

My eyes grow heavy; and Sleep, that has so long

forsaken me, comes now, and lays my head upon her loving bosom, and softly bids me take my fill of rest.

Rest!—

“In meetings of a certain kind,” said Max, after listening for some time quite complacently to our comments upon his story, “it is the custom for the last singer to name him who next shall entertain the company. This is called ‘knocking one down for a song.’ Would it not be well for us to imitate this custom in our entertainment here?”

“O, certainly,” was the immediate response of all.

“Then, Miss Kate,” said he, “I knock you down for the next story.”

“And I,” returned Kate, with a gravity as becoming to her as the regimentals of a “Seventy-Sixer” to the boy-soldier of our own day, “with the philosophic spirit of my sex, bow submission to the ‘blow.’”

The Parlor Boarder.

A SCHOOL REMINISCENCE OF KATE'S.

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north wind's breath,
And stars to set—but all,
Thou hast *all* seasons for thine own, O Death!

We know when moons shall wane,
When summer birds from far shall cross the sea,
When autumn's hue shall tinge the golden grain,
But who shall teach us when to look for thee?

MRS. HEMANS.

You all know, I suppose, that because I could not, or, it may be, would not, learn French at home from funny old Machebœuf, whose tone, if not accent, I did my best to imitate at my lessons, by holding my nose while repeating his words, I was cruelly exiled at a very early age to Mount St. Margaret, where a number of ladies from France had established themselves, for the laudable purpose of imparting some of their own cultivation to the minds and manners of the female portion of "Young America." This act I regarded at the time as one of gross injustice, as who

at my age would not? But, having outlived the infliction of the wrong, I have, with my wonted magnanimity, long since forgiven it.

I was at that time the youngest in the school, and was, in consequence, something of a plaything for the older girls, and soon became quite a pet with *Madame la Supérieure* herself, whose endearing appellation of "*Petit Chou*," "little cabbage,"—an abbreviation, probably, of *Chou-chou*,—attaches to me among some of my very old friends even until this day; and, not being for a while overburthened with tasks, I had an opportunity, which I did not neglect to improve, of indulging to the utmost my natural spirit of inquiry, or, as some of you, perhaps, would call it, of inquisitiveness, and, before I was a month in the convent, knew the history of almost every girl in it, the number of dresses each one had, besides her uniforms, what pocket-money she was allowed, and whether she had at home such a dear, good-natured old grand-papa as I had.

Well, having sufficiently satisfied, or perhaps exhausted, my spirit of inquiry, I sat myself down in good earnest to study, and bade fair to carry away the green ribbon, the badge of distinction in my class, when my mind was suddenly drawn from its proper pursuit by the arrival among us of a new scholar. Whence, or when, or how she came no one knew; at least, none of us little girls knew. The first knowledge we had of her, was her appearance in class, unheralded and unintroduced. But it was only in class or the refectory that we saw anything of her, for,

being a "Parlor Boarder," she neither shared our dormitory, nor joined in our recreations. Whether she ever saw any of us we could not easily decide, for, from the time she came in among us until she went out, she never raised her eyes to the face of any one present, though, to be sure, she could not well have *raised* her eyes to mine, who was but a little thing at the time, scarcely knee-high to a lady-bug, while she was a full-grown woman, and very old we thought—twenty at the least.

A woman grown, and with the unmistakable air of a lady, to come to school! was enough to excite the wonder of every little head in the class, and this wonder was increased, when we found how far behind the slowest she was in her knowledge of French, which, with music, was all that she seemed to apply herself to. But our wonder at all this was less than our admiration of her surpassing beauty, a beauty entirely without the "foreign aid of ornament;" for she was in mourning, and her beauty was almost hidden beneath a veil of the deepest melancholy. Indeed, we hardly knew at times whether most to admire or pity her, for the look of hopeless sorrow in that lovely face would have made a heart of stone—if stones have hearts—ache to contemplate.

Months passed, and in her rapid progress the "Parlor Boarder" left far behind all those she had started with at the beginning of the year, and her first classmates saw little of her now but in the refectory. Yet that little showed them she was still unchanged, that she still came and went with her eyes bent upon the

floor, and with the same look of settled sorrow that had so much excited our pity when she came first among us. But one thing more than our useless conjectures of the cause of her sorrow now particularly troubled us. Though a regular attendant upon the services of the chapel, she never approached the altar, and we, who had more zeal perhaps than knowledge, began to regard her in our uncharitable little hearts, as one unhappily without the pale of Christianity, and condemned already to eternal reprobation.

This fear, however, was after a time removed. During the last week of Lent, it was whispered through the convent, that the "Parlor Boarder" had been seen in conference with the chaplain—had actually gone to confession; and we were all delighted on Easter morning to see her among the first communicants. From that time her manner became changed. Though she still wore a look of sadness, and retained much of her taciturnity, she no longer studied to avoid us, but, without joining in them, was a frequent witness of our amusements, and would sometimes even speak a pleasant word or bestow a kindly smile upon one of us little ones.

Vacation came, and I was brought home, leaving the "Parlor Boarder" at the convent. When, six weeks after, I was taken back, the "Parlor Boarder" was gone; but when or with whom she went, no one could tell, or those who could, would not; and in a little while she was quite forgotten by most, and seldom thought of by the rest of us, when our memories were agreeably refreshed concerning her by the ar-

rival of a magnificent cake—"a wedding gift to her young friends at Mount St. Margaret, from Mrs. Haral, the late 'Parlor Boarder' of the convent;" and, until the cake was eaten, few things were discussed among us but the beauty and melancholy of the donor, and the mystery that still surrounded her.

But "eaten bread is soon forgotten," and so is eaten cake, and the eaten cake was hardly sooner forgotten than she who had given it, when, in little less than two years, she came again to possess herself of a place in our memories, and this time an abiding one.

A lady, who had been for some time a postulant, was about to take the veil, and all the scholars were summoned to the chapel to witness the ceremony. Here every thing wore a festal appearance. Statues and pictures were crowned and draped and festooned with flowers. The bishop, who, with his attendant priests, sat within the sanctuary, was in full pontificals, and the altar was beautifully adorned and blazing with lights. But with all this display we were familiar, and it could not divert our attention from the door at which the postulant was to enter. At length she came—a woman of commanding figure and almost dazzling beauty—accompanied by one of the professed, and—as she swept towards the altar in a bridal dress of white satin, covered with a robe of richest lace, and a wreath of orange flowers on her stately head, whence depended a veil that could have enveloped her whole person, with diamonds flashing from her throat, her bosom, her arms, her hands, and the braids of raven hair that bound her majestic

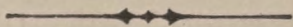
brow—the splendor of the holy place seemed dimmed by her presence. It was the “Parlor Boarder,” who, after the solemn service of the altar, having been reconducted from the chapel, returned a little while after, shorn of her beautiful tresses, and wearing the black dress and unbecoming cap of the order, and thereafter to be known by the name of MADAME HARRAL.

In a community made up principally of ladies of foreign birth, the admission of one to whom the English language was her mother tongue, was regarded with much complacency by those most interested in its success, and Madame Harral, at the earliest period prescribed by the rules of the house, was placed in charge of the English class to which I then belonged, and in this capacity she soon came to be as much beloved for her kind and cheerful disposition, as she had been admired and pitied before for her surpassing beauty and uncomplaining sorrow.

The mistresses of our classes were always with us at our recreations, and Madame Harral, as our English mistress, accompanied us, of course, in our English recreations; that is, the recreations in which we were permitted to speak English; and at such times, when disposed to listen, she would seek to amuse us with stories of what she had known, or heard, or read of in the world, through which, however, she always managed to convey some lesson for the correction of the faults and foibles of those under her care.

Now, with all my admitted excellences, I do not

claim to be wholly perfect. Indeed I know I am not: for, though I may not often *do* what is wrong, I am conscious of sometimes leaving undone that which I should do. But this defect in my character was more apparent some years ago than it is now—though, I dare say, some of you think it sufficiently prominent still—and I have since thought, that it was as much for my improvement as the general entertainment, that Madame Harral one evening related to us the following story.



I.

THE OLD HOUSE AND ITS OCCUPANTS.

ON a street which, in its march through the city, improvement had not yet reached—a narrow, crooked, ill-paved, and generally ill-lighted street—stood, within a quarter of a century, a house, over the tiled roof of which, it was said, almost a hundred years had passed, leaving behind them, however, very few marks of age, and fewer still of decay, for it had been built at a great outlay of money and labor, for the permanent residence of the proprietor and his family, and was regarded at one time with a respect amounting almost to veneration, by the tenants and poorer neighbors of its aristocratic owner. It had been a cheerful dwelling, too, in its day, sombre as it now appeared, with its old-fashioned front of very dark brick.

Light feet, bearing lighter hearts, had tripped across its uncarpeted, well-waxed floors, and up and down its dark oaken stairs. Bright faces had peered from its small windows; and song, and laughter, and the merry shouts of children, had sounded through its low, wainscoted rooms. But the song, and laugh, and shout, were hushed long ago, and succeeded by the groan of pain, the sob of grief, and the cry of mortal anguish. One by one the bright faces had disappeared from the windows, and grown dim and faded and old. The bounding steps of youth had become heavy, as the hearts they bore sank daily beneath the weight of years and sorrows, until they found a resting-place in the grave; and the once cheerful dwelling was finally abandoned to silence and to gloom.

But, though abandoned to silence and to gloom, the old house was not wholly uninhabited. In a close back room, into which the sun never entered, might have been seen almost any day in the year, a very old lady, whose thin gray hair was hidden beneath a close-fitting black silk cap, with a narrow black lace border, her small person wrapped in a chintz dressing-gown, of a once gay pattern, and her feet buried in thick carpet shoes, seated in a large easy-chair, and knitting as diligently as if her bread depended upon her industry. And in the dark kitchen, rendered still darker by her presence, or passing in and out and through the house, like a huge shadow, might have been seen a very black old servant, who, born a slave of the family, had, when declared free by law, remained in

voluntary servitude with the mistress whose attendant she had been when both were in their girlhood; and gliding noiselessly through the dark and cheerless rooms, or looking sadly out of the parlor window upon the busy life of the street, might also have been seen a little girl, some ten or twelve years old, whose dress, for all days and all seasons, was a black bombazet frock, made high in the neck, an apron of blue and white check, and coarse shoes and stockings.



II.

CLAUDINE.

THE early home of this little girl had been one of poverty, but was not therefore an unhappy one, for peace and love had found a shelter beneath its humble roof. But the home to which she was brought upon the death of her parents, though often told by old Dinchy—sometimes rebukingly, sometimes encouragingly—of her good fortune in having found it, was to her a most unhappy one, and the heart of the orphan Claudine, with that painful yearning which is called *home-sickness*, wandered hourly back to the wayside cottage, where her early childhood had been passed, and where, if she had not been exempt from privations, she had at least known affection.

Yet, in justice to the old lady, who was the grand-

aunt of Claudine, I would not have it thought that she had any wish to make the child unhappy. Very far from it. When made acquainted, by old Dinchy, with the destitute condition in which she was left by the death of her parents, she had opened the doors to her which had been closed against almost every one for years; ungrudgingly since had fed and clothed her, if not luxuriously or gayly, certainly without stint and comfortably, and was perfectly willing that she should make herself as happy as possible. But the little kindness that time, and ill-health, and a naturally unsocial disposition, had left in the old lady's heart was by no means demonstrative, and though she never chid, she never used any endearing terms towards her young relative, whose presence she seemed rather to endure than to covet, and Claudine, who had never been addressed by mother or father, but by some diminutive, some pet name, expressive of affection, was chilled by the coldness of her aunt, which she mistook for aversion, and never approached her, except in the performance of some duty. This indeed was seldom; for old Dinchy would yield to none her prerogative of waiting upon "Miss Gitty," or "Young Missis," as she generally called her mistress, and Claudine was not permitted to enter her aunt's apartment oftener than once a day, to dust and put it in order, except when she was required to hold upon her hands the yarn from which the old lady wound the balls for her knitting.

Her new home was therefore any thing but a happy one to poor Claudine; and it was very sad to see a creature so young wandering listlessly about by her-

self, without pet or plaything, through the dim and silent rooms, or up and down what had once been a garden, but was now nothing but a piece of inclosed ground, filled with dead trees and shrubs, and rank and worthless weeds. Once, for the sake of companionship, she tried to make friends with a vagabond cat, that she used sometimes to meet in the yard, but the vicious creature turned upon the hand that would have caressed it, and bit it in a most shocking manner. Thenceforth she sought no new acquaintances. Had she been sent to school, or put to work, or even been permitted to go once a week to Church, she would have been most grateful, for it would have relieved her of the burthen that idleness was fastening upon her. But she had been well taught by her parents, and, because she could read with ease and write a fair hand, her aunt believed she had received quite education enough. Then, except the little sewing she did now and then for herself and Dinchy, no work was required at her hands; and as to going to Church, that was out of the question. The father of Claudine, in marrying a beautiful girl of foreign birth, had, much to the displeasure of his family, conformed to the religion of his wife, and in that religion he wished his child to be reared. But this wish, which, as she had a superstitious reverence for the wishes of the dead, she could not actively oppose, the old lady determined to do nothing to advance, and by not providing Claudine with clothes proper, as she thought, to wear, she as effectually prevented her going to Church as if she had forbidden her to do so.

III.

AN INCIDENT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

ONE afternoon, while looking envyingly out at some children at play in the street, a handsome lad, a little older than herself, tapped at the window at which she was sitting, and said,

“Please let me go to the top of your house, after my sister’s bird, that has got out of its cage.”

“I can’t do that,” answered Claudine in a whisper, just raising the window sufficient to let her words escape; “but if you will stay here a few minutes, I will go up and try to catch the bird for you.” And taking off her shoes, she stole up to the roof, where the little truant was perched in the full enjoyment of his new-found liberty, and looking sideways in triumph at the cage, hanging from an upper story window of the house opposite, from which he had fled. But his triumph was short; for not suspecting the approach of an enemy in the rear, he was easily retaken, and sent back to the custody of his loving mistress.

This incident, trifling as it seemed, began an era in the life of Claudine. The grateful mistress of the little deserter came over with her brother, to thank the captor for the service rendered, and an immediate friendship was formed between them. Thenceforth no day passed during the warm months that Louise

and her brother did not come to the window, where Claudine now sat every afternoon, to have a little chat upon subjects that, to a casual listener, would seem the most unimportant in the world, but which they found so interesting that it often held them engaged for an hour at a time; and when the cold weather came, and they could no longer stand at the window, the visitors ventured—timidly at first—to enter the small dark parlor, and have their chat, though with bated breath, within doors. Besides this, to amuse their friend during the hours they could not be with her, they would frequently leave with her a book that had interested themselves—some poem, perhaps, or novel, in which the world beyond the walls of that old house was described as something hardly less beautiful than the Eden our first parents lost—and the heart of the recluse was soon filled with impatient longings to go forth into the world, and behold for herself that which had been painted to her so fair.

Yes, over and over again, when sitting in the dark, cold parlor, with her hands wound in her apron to keep them warm, admiring the bright, hospitable aspect of the house opposite, where her friend Louise, and her friend's brother, Gustave, were happy in the presence and affection of dear and indulgent parents, would the spirit of the young girl rise up in rebellion against the vassalage in which she was held, by her feebleness and poverty, and she resolve at all hazards to abandon the home with which Providence had provided her, and seek one among those who could better sympathize with her than her invalid aunt and her

aunt's old servant Dinchy. But these resolves passed away with the darkness of which they were born, and again she returned to her monotonous duties and listless wanderings, or the perusal of some book, that was again to fill her mind with wild and impracticable schemes for the improvement of her state, and her heart with desires of that happiness which wealth and distinction only are supposed able to bestow. Yet, in all these schemes of improvement, in all these desires for wealth and worldly distinction, Claudine was not wholly selfish. In the most magnificent of her castles in Spain, the most splendid and luxurious apartments were always reserved for the use of her friend Louise and her friend's brother, and capacious halls stood always open for the reception of the homeless. And thus passed the years of this young girl's life, until she stood upon the verge of womanhood.



IV.

A REVELATION.

THE parents of Louise, if not positively rich, were among those who are said to be "well to do in the world," with some pretensions to fashion; and as their children grew up, their house became a very gay one, for both Louise and her brother were very charming young people. In the nightly gayeties of the house

Claudine was frequently urged to join, but her invariable answer to all these solicitations was, that she could not. At length Louise insisted to know the cause of these repeated refusals, when, to put a stop to all further importunity, she candidly confessed she had not a dress fit to wear beyond the threshold of her own door.

"Then the more shame for your aunt that you have not," exclaimed Louise indignantly, "who, as every body knows, is immensely rich."

"My aunt rich?" said Claudine. "O, impossible!"

"Not at all impossible, my dear; for though she hasn't the heart to spend sixpence upon herself any more than upon you, she is rich enough to buy this whole block, and the next too, if she chose."

"My aunt rich?" continued Claudine still incredulously.

"Yes, rich; and so will you be, if you chance to outlive her, for pa says, she hasn't a relation in the world but you, and, unless she should take a religious turn just before she dies, as miserly people sometimes do, and leave the money she can no longer keep, to some society, for the propogation in foreign lands of the Gospel that she has never listened to in her own, the whole of her vast wealth must one day come to you."

"My aunt so rich!" murmured Claudine, when Louise had left her. "My aunt so rich, and I, her heiress, doomed to a life of utter uselessness—a worthless weed in the one neglected corner of the fair garden of the world! while with a portion, a very small

portion of her hoarded wealth, I might, with the talents with which Heaven has endowed me, rise to my proper station in society, and win happiness for myself, and the esteem of others. Lonely, idle, ignorant, what a life for one who, when *she* dies—”

She paused. A terrible thought, like some huge black monster, forced itself upon her mental gaze. At first she shrank from it in horror, and would have driven it from her instantly and forever, but it would not leave her, and day and night for many and many a week it remained ever before her, until, from long familiarity, she came at last to regard it with some degree of complacency. In all this time Claudine had never given utterance to the wish that her aunt would die;—she believed that in the most secret recesses of her heart she had never harbored such a wish;—yet the thought, that in her present weak state, for she was now confined to her bed, she might be suddenly surprised by death—strangled in one of her severe fits of coughing, or smothered by turning upon her face in her sleep—was often dwelt upon with a feeling akin to pleasure, when accompanied by the hope of one day seeing herself mistress of the wealth the old lady was supposed to possess; and this feeling proved, that, although she would not for the whole world have dipped her hands in the blood of her aged relation, or been in any way accessory to her death, or have abridged by one short moment the life now drawing rapidly to a close, she would hardly have regarded as evil any chance by which this only barrier in her way to fortune might be removed.

V.

A WISH REALIZED.

I HAVE said that Dinchy was tenacious of her prerogative, as sole attendant upon her mistress, and would yield her right to none. But I should have added, except on prayer or watch-meeting nights at old Zion. Dinchy had a powerful voice, and it was always found an able auxiliary, when any tyro in such matters attempted to hold forth in prayer or exhortation, for she so timed her interjaculatory "Amen!" "Glory!" "Come, Lord!" or favorite verse,

"Shout on! pray on! we're gaining groun'!

Halle-halle-lu-ye!

Ole Satan's kingdom mus' come down!

Glory, halle-lu-ye!"

as to divert the attention of the congregation from whatever was particularly weak or unmeaning in the language of "de gifted broder," and was therefore a highly-esteemed and useful member of her church. At such times, Claudine was permitted to take her place at the bedside of the invalid, but with the strictest injunctions, not for the world to leave her a minute alone, or neglect to give her a drink the moment she took one of her "spells."

One evening Dinchy went out to a "protracted

meeting," and Claudine was left alone with her aunt. The night was warm, and the room in which she sat almost suffocating, and finding the old lady to sleep soundly for more than an hour, she thought she would just steal down to one of the parlor windows, for a little fresh air, taking the precaution, however, of leaving the doors between them open, that she might hear the least movement of her charge.

It was a beautiful evening, and the street was filled with an animated crowd, passing to and fro in obedience to the calls of business or pleasure, and the cheerful sounds of human voices, mingled with delightful music, came pleasantly upon her ear, as she sat at the open window, watching hour after hour a merry party assembled in the home of Louise, to celebrate the twenty-first birthday of Gustave. Suddenly the evil thought, that had become but too familiar to her mind of late, returned, but this time rather in the form of a wish, and she muttered with a feeling of impatience, "If my aunt were dead, I might now be a participant of the pleasure of which I am only a distant and an envying witness!" She started, for at that moment the dark form of Dinchy passed between her and the light of the street, and hastily rising, returned to the chamber of her aunt, to which her shrieks immediately summoned the old servant.

The old lady had evidently endeavored to help herself to the drink that stood on the table near her, for she was drawn up quite high in the bed, and turned almost upon her face, with one hand stretched over the table, from which the cup, that lay broken

on the floor, had, no doubt, fallen. And thus she was found by her niece—*dead!*

The horror of Claudine is not to be described. It is true that she had not actively participated in the death of her aunt; yet she could not conceal from herself, that an event, which could not have been long deferred, had been precipitated by her neglect, and when she thought how earnestly she had desired it but a minute before, she felt that in her heart she was not wholly guiltless of murder. The certain possession of the long-coveted wealth; the introduction into cheerful and refined society, that soon after followed, and the admiration of many distinguished persons of the opposite sex, all failed to pluck from her memory the “rooted sorrow” left by the guilty consciousness of her cruel negligence.

Then, to divert her thoughts from the one painful subject, she turned her mind to the acquisition of knowledge, and, to what is higher than knowledge in the world’s regard, the accomplishments supposed to be necessary to one in her new position. But all would not do. A wounded conscience is hard to cure, and the wound of her conscience was deep and rankling.

VI.

A CATASTROPHE.

BUT Religion, which ever comes "with healing on her wings," did for her that which time could not, and her wound, if not wholly cured, ceased at last to rankle, and the agony of remorse was succeeded by the tender regret that always accompanies sincere contrition. Her heart, which had long seemed dead to all kindly influences, pulsed anew at the voice of affection, and Claudine became a wife—the wife of Gustave—and believed herself as secure of happiness now as if she had indeed taken "a bond of fate."

And so believing, and in that belief almost forgetful of all that had made the misery of her past—grief for her early loss, her long privations and wasted life, her bitter remorse—she went forth with her young, and handsome, and most gloriously gifted husband upon their wedding tour. Then, when she beheld for the first time, in all the imposing majesty, the picturesque beauty of which she had sometimes read, but oftener vaguely dreamed, the monarch mountain, with his forest crown, glittering in the golden light of day, and the peaceful valley slumbering in happy security at his feet; the torrent leaping from rock to rock, and flashing like molten diamonds in the sun; the deep calm river, sweeping proudly on

towards the sea; the inverted heaven of the seemingly shoreless lake; but, above all, the unimagined, unimaginable wonder of Niagara, whose voice seemed the continuous utterings of the thunders of the Apocalypse, she felt the significance of the oft-repeated phrase, "the Divinity of Nature," and but that she had lately studied in the school of Christian philosophy, might, like too many others, have confounded cause and effect, and given to the works of God the worship due only to God himself.

A month, in which a thousand things were stored in the memory to enrich the poverty of some future hour, passed rapidly away, and Claudine and her husband turned their faces homeward; and having left the crowded cars, in which they had come from one of the cities of the lakes, took a carriage at ——— to make the rest of their journey to the place whence they were to take the steamboat for home. The morning was beautiful, and, as the hearts of the happy pair beat as lightly in their breasts as those of the birds that wantoned among the trees by the wayside, the pleasant word and cheerful laugh, that followed an occasional allusion to some of the incidents of their travel, gave speed to the wings of time, and shortened by many a mile the road along which they were whirled.

But as the day advanced their conversation flagged. Pleasant remarks were still made, and still replied to as pleasantly as ever. But they were less continuous; and for many minutes both at last remained silent. Claudine had fallen into a reverie, but rousing her-

self, she now addressed a remark to Gustave. He did not reply; and upon repeating it, she turned towards him. He sat bolt upright, with his eyes fixed upon her.

"Gustave!" she shrieked, and drew him wildly towards her. Her cry fell upon closed ears, her arms embraced the dead!

"Dear!" said one of the youngest of us, drawing a long breath, "how shocking!" Then, after a pause, she asked,

"But poor Claudine, Madame; what became of her? Is she dead?"

"Yes, my dear,—to the world," she answered, and rising abruptly, walked into the chapel. We then knew that Madame Harral had been telling us her own story.

"Although," said Frank, whom Kate had called upon for the next story, "I have never been so fortunate as to discover a manuscript, nor hear from the lips of the hero or heroine of one of life's tragedies, or comedies, any of its wonderful events, I do assure you that the story I am about to relate, for the delight and edification of this respectable company, however I may have come by the facts narrated, is quite as true as either of those to which we have lately listened with so much interest, not to say improvement.

The Heir of Ketchum Purchase.

A VERITABLE HISTORY BY FRANK CONWAY.

For Banquo's issue have I filed my soul.

MACBETH.

I.

EXTREMES MEET—THE REVELLERS AND THE BEGGAR
WITH A VIEW OF A FAMILY SCENE.

THE down-town clocks of the good city of Gotham, beginning with that of the Middle Dutch—now the Post Office—had just ceased, and the up-town ones, led on by St. John's—St. John's was up-town then, whatever the people about Union Square and the Fifth Avenue may think at the present time—had just begun to strike the hour of twelve, when, one intensely cold night in the winter of 18—, two young men, of fashionable exterior, might have been seen leaving a house in the neighborhood of the Park, celebrated for its good wines, and notorious for its high play. The elder, who was humming

"Spare a ha'penny, spare a ha'penny,
Spare a poor little gipsy a ha'penny,"

made popular by the exquisite singing of Mrs. Holman—the great *Cantatrice* of that day—then in the zenith of her fame—was probably not more than two or three and thirty, and, but for the marks of early indulgence stamped upon his countenance, would have been considered handsome, and the younger, who could scarcely have seen his twenty-eighth year, was decidedly so, notwithstanding his present jaded appearance, the consequence, no doubt, of the strong excitement in which the last few hours had been passed.

As they turned into Broadway, they were accosted by one of those wretched little mendicants—the embryo thieves and vagabonds of the city—who are suffered to infest the streets, with the usual whine,

"Please, sir, gim'e a penny to buy my moder a loaf o' bread."

The elder, with the indifference of one accustomed to such solicitations, was passing on; but his companion, touched by the pitiful tone of the shivering little creature before him, a child apparently not more than five or six years old,

"Whose looped and windowed raggedness"

was scarce enough to keep him from freezing, stopped, and putting his hand into his pocket for the purpose of drawing thence a few cents, after a minute or two's

ineffectual fumbling, with rather a blank air, pulled it out empty.

"By George, Brenton," said he, "I'm cleaned out. Lend me a sixpence, if you have it."

"I've nothing less than a quarter," answered Brenton, and was moving on.

"Well, lend me that."

"Nonsense, my good fellow, you don't mean to throw away a quarter on that little impostor?"

"I'm afraid," was the reply, "that I've thrown away more to-night on less deserving objects. So lend me the quarter."

Brenton did so; and no sooner was the hand of the child closed upon the young man's bounty, than he darted across the street with all possible speed—that, however, was not much, for his little limbs seemed hardly able to support the weight of his emaciated body.

"I'll bet you ten to one, Ketchum," said Brenton, "that that little rascal's mother never gets a sight of your quarter."

"Done!" returned Ketchum. "But how are we to know?"

"By tracking the young fox to his hole."

"Agreed!" was the ready response. And the young men set off in immediate pursuit of the lessening figure of the little beggar.

They proceeded up Broadway a short distance above Washington Hall—where Stewart's now is—when turning to the right, they continued to follow the child, now scarcely discernible amid the deep shadows

of the houses that seemed almost to meet above their heads, until he finally disappeared in the cellar of an old frame building, then tottering to its fall. Here they stopped.

"A drawn bet," said Ketchum.

"Not yet," returned his companion, who had discovered a feeble light struggling through the rags that were intended to fill an unglazed window at their feet, and stooping down, he partially removed the stuffing, when looking into a wretched hole, unfloored and unplastered, beheld the object of Ketchum's charity exhibiting the coin to a young woman, the picture of hopeless wretchedness, who, by the flickering light of a wick drawn through the eye of a button and floating in oil, or rather grease, contained in a yellow earthen saucer, sat busily employed in making a pair of very coarse fustian trowsers.

"Look 'ere, mammy," said the little fellow, while pleasure for a moment lit up his pretty, though pallid, features, "see wot I got."

"What!" she exclaimed, as she took the money from his hand, while a smile gave a momentary brightness to a countenance that must have once been very beautiful, "two shillings!"

"Two shillings?" echoed an old woman covered with rags, who sat cowering over a rickety sheet-iron stove, in which the last handful of shavings had long been burned out. "How did you get it, Jeffy, my son? Did you hook it?"

"No, granny," replied the child, with some show of indignation, "I didn't hook it. A gem'man gim it me."

"Some drunken feller, I s'pose," mumbled the crone, "that didn't know a quarter from a cent."

"Bless him!" added the young woman, "whoever he is. He has given bread to the starving."

"I have lost," said Brenton, as he rose from the window, when Ketchum, from the promptings of curiosity, stooped to take a peep into the cellar, but starting suddenly back, with an exclamation of horror, would have fallen but for the ready hand of his companion.

"What's the matter?" demanded the latter.

"Mere giddiness," was the answer. "But let us go."

Taking the arm of Brenton, the young men were turning to retrace their steps, when they were jostled by a fellow who came reeling down the street. Growling an oath, he bade them stand out of the way, and upon Brenton replying with another, the ruffian showed a disposition to use his fists, and but for the interference of Ketchum, who almost dragged his companion from the spot, would have followed up this demonstration with a blow. He then staggered on to the cellar that the friends had just left, and which he entered with an evident determination of venting the wrath, excited by those without, upon the poor creatures who acknowledged his authority within.

"What," he hiccupped, with an oath too dreadful to be repeated, "are you up for till this time o' night, wasting light and fire?"

"Fire!" exclaimed the crone, with a derisive laugh, "it's hard to waste what we ha'n't had."

"Shut up, old woman;—give us none o' your lip."

"I won't shut up. It's hard indeed if I can't say what I like in my own house."

"*Your* house?"

"Yes, *my* house. What house had ye but mine when you got married, I'd jest like to know? And what have you had since?"

"Married!" he repeated, the word seeming to give a new direction to his thoughts. "A blessed marriage it has turned out to me."

"Too good for the likes of you, anuff sight."

"Mother!" interposed the meek wife.

"Hold yer tongue, Sophy," answered the old woman, whose spirit was now up. "If you'm fool enough to put up with his tantrums, I a'nt. A pretty thing, indeed, for him to come with his authority, when we've been freezing and starving here till this hour o' the night, waiting for what that poor child mought get for us."

"What did you get, Jeff?" asked the man, whose attention had by the old woman's remark been drawn to the child.

"Two shillins," answered the little fellow, but with evident unwillingness.

"Well, fork it over."

"I gin it to mammy."

"What did Wash get?"

"Washington," answered Sophy with some hesitation, "has not been out to-night. He was too ill."

"Too lazy, you mean;—the blasted sheep! But let me have the money."

"I was just going out with it, George," she said, timidly, "for something for the children. I have not been able to get any work this week, except this one pair of trowsers, which came so late to-day that I could not get them done; and we have had nothing to eat since morning."

"Whose fault was that?" growled her husband. "I took nuthin from you."

"No, nor brought us nuthin nyther," retorted his mother.

"Come, old woman, no more of your slack. Give me the money, madam, and I'll go over to Stillwell's and get what you want."

With a foreboding sigh, his poor wife gave him the money, and, as he was about to leave the cellar, his mother said,

"Take the pitcher with you, George, and bring us a little gin; and tell 'em to put plenty of peppermint in it, to drive the wind from our stomachs."

Like an obedient son, he went to a shelf, and taking thence a common brown pitcher, without a handle, departed. But hours passed and he did not return. Poor little Jeff, worn out with cold, hunger, and fatigue, had crawled to the rags where his brother lay, and was soon sound asleep; the old woman in a little while followed his example, breathing, instead of prayers,

"Curses not loud but deep"

upon the head of her undutiful son; but the spirit-broken wife sat awaiting his return in cold and dark-

ness, for her scanty supply of grease was soon exhausted, until the noise in the street told her it was day, when he came staggering in, and throwing himself upon their wretched apology for a bed, was soon lost in the heavy sleep of drunkenness. Sophy did not attempt to sleep. But, when the morning was sufficiently advanced, putting on an old straw bonnet and throwing around her a worn and faded shawl, took a basket on her arm and went forth, to seek from the charity of strangers food for her famishing family.



II.

SAINTS ABROAD NOT ALWAYS SAINTS AT HOME.
—SOME ACCOUNT OF MRS. KETCHUM AND HER
FAMILY.

THE young men returned to Broadway, and when they got into the neighborhood of the Park theatre, Ketchum proposed that they should go into Charley Irish's and get something to eat, and into Charley Irish's they accordingly went. He was evidently a good deal excited; but Brenton, attributing what appeared strange in his manner to the rather free use of the wine which had been supplied them at the gaming-house, thought, or at least said, nothing about it, but proceeded to discuss his supper as soon as it was set

before him. But Ketchum could not eat. Something there was which "stuck in his throat" that prevented him swallowing any thing but a glass or two of wine. At length he broke forth with what he meant to be a very gay laugh, but which had none of the heart's gayety in its sound, and said,

"Do you know, Brenton, I'm inclined to believe that the poor little wretch we saw in the street to-night is my own son."

"Your son?" asked his companion. "What do you mean?"

"Just what I say. The young woman we saw in the cellar is Sophy Ingraham as sure as I am Edward Ketchum; and if that boy is hers—of which there can be little doubt—I very much fear he is also mine." Then, to make himself perfectly understood by Brenton, he entered upon the history of certain years of his life, with which, as well as other events intimately connected with my story, I will proceed in my own way to make you acquainted.

The father of Edward Ketchum died when his son was but an infant in fact as well as in law, leaving him to the guardianship of his mother, one of the "unco guid" as Burns has it, being a member of all Bible and Tract Societies, Sabbath-school Unions, and every thing of that sort in the city, in which are sown, in the name of a religion of peace and love, the seeds of hatred and discord and all uncharitableness. Besides her pretensions to uncommon piety, she was most ostentatiously charitable, having always on her list, as visiting member of half a score of as-

sociations for the relief of the poor, a number of old women to whom she distributed bibles and boluses, sermons and soup, and pamphlets and potatoes, while she supplied a few poor young women with abundance of work at very low wages, and plenty of tracts but little time for reading; and might have been seen any fine Sunday marshalling a troop of ragged and hungry-looking urchins, who were intended to swell the grand annual Sunday-school procession, in which she always bore a most distinguished part.

With avocations so numerous and multifarious abroad, it can hardly be supposed that much time could be given by Mrs. Ketchum to the affairs of her family. But to make amends to her son for the want of parental care, she sent him to the best, that is to say, the most expensive schools in the city, preparatory to his admission into old Columbia, and supplied at the same time, without stint and without hesitation, every want, nay, every extravagance of one constitutionally gay, and who was, moreover, determined to make the most of the short time allotted him on earth for, as he thought, the purpose of enjoyment. As to her servants, if they did but perform the duties required of them, and attend with decorum at the morning and evening prayers and other pious exercises of the family, she did not seem to consider them worth a thought—except when at a loss for conversation among her religious friends.

In the family, or rather among the servants of Mrs. Ketchum, was one possessing peculiar claims to her

kindness and regard. First, as a destitute orphan—for the poor and friendless have a *right* to the protection of the rich and powerful;—and secondly, as a near relation of the husband to whom she was indebted for her present position in society, for all her wealth had been derived from him. But, forgetful alike of what was due to the child of her adoption, and respect to the memory of her husband, she suffered Sophy Ingraham to grow up in ignorance, and to perform the services of a menial in her family. Her excuses for this heartless conduct were, that the intellect of poor Sophy was too weak to bear cultivation, and that one who had nothing to depend on but the bounty of friends, should be able to earn her own living. And these excuses were considered valid by the pious friends of the rich and charitable Mrs. Ketchum.

Mrs. Ketchum was right in saying that the intellect of Sophy was weak. Had it not been, she would hardly have submitted to the indignity of being treated as servant by those who should have received her as an equal. But Mrs. Ketchum's neglect of the orphan rose, not so much from the low opinion she entertained of the mind of the poor girl, as fear of what her beauty might produce. Sophy was beautiful, with a beauty resembling some exquisite picture of the Madonna—that of a serious and holy innocence—and might, nay, must, if properly brought forward in society, attract the notice of Edward, and this notice might ultimately lead to a marriage of the cousins, a result which, however natural, would be

by no means agreeable to Mrs. Ketchum, who intended Edward for a relation of her own. The precaution of the good lady was, however, of no avail. Edward had been attracted by the beauty of Sophy, and was not slow in making her acquainted with his admiration of her; and she, who had hitherto been treated with marked neglect, could not fail to be highly gratified by his attention. This he soon perceived; and, by professing a love for the simple-minded girl that he did not very seriously feel, made himself master of her heart. The power he had thus obtained he was ungenerous enough to abuse; and in a paroxysm of virtuous indignation, Mrs. Ketchum turned the unfortunate Sophy into the street, and banished her son to the country for six whole weeks—in the shooting season.

The situation of the wretched girl was indeed a desolate one. With the exception of the Ketchums, she knew not that she had a relation in the world, and there was no one upon whose kindness she could pretend to any claim. She wandered about from early morning until almost evening, yet found no place of shelter, and she shuddered as the fear pressed itself upon her, that she must spend the coming night without the cover of a roof. At length, overcome by weakness of body and anguish of heart, she sat herself down on the steps of a stately mansion, and began to weep. Here she naturally attracted the notice of many, some of whom would stop for a moment, make a gross or uncharitable remark, and then pass on their way without an effort to relieve even by

one kind word the distress they could not fail to see, until one came by who recognized her. This was Betty Mallison, a poor woman who had been occasionally employed at Mrs. Ketchum's in washing and house-cleaning. Betty, though a little intemperate, was by no means heartless, and, upon learning the cause of poor Sophy's sorrow, was filled with indignation at the inhuman conduct of Mrs. Ketchum, and in the kindest manner offered to take the unhappy girl home with her; an offer which, as may well be supposed, was readily accepted; and in the miserable abode of this poor woman Sophy Ingraham, at the early age of sixteen, became a mother.

Betty Mallison, like Mrs. Ketchum, was a widow, and like her, too, the mother of an only child. But, unlike that lady, she had formed no matrimonial plans for her son; so that when George, who had been long absent at sea, on his return to the maternal roof, within a year after Sophy had found shelter under it, offered himself to that young woman for a husband, it was with the full approbation of his mother; for the patient industry by which Sophy not only supported herself and her babe, but contrived to add considerably to the comforts of her old friend, had secured the regard of Betty, who hoped by this marriage to bind this gentle and grateful creature to her for life.

At first Sophy was disposed to give a decided negative to the offer of George, for her heart was still too full of him for whose sake she had suffered so severely to admit another object. But when she considered that by so doing she must disoblige, not only the son,

but his kind-hearted mother, and expose herself to the necessity of seeking another home; and where, for one situated as she was, could this be found?—and believing that George would be, as he promised, “a father to her boy,” she yielded a reluctant consent, and became his wife.

For the first year of their marriage the united exertions of husband and wife enabled them to live very comfortably. But in the second, things changed rapidly with them for the worse. Sophy, a second time a mother, had fallen into ill health, and George, a strong, active young fellow, who as a stevedore need seldom be out of work, had contracted such habits of intemperance that, except in very hurried times, no one would employ him. The sickness of the wife and intemperance of the husband soon brought them into such a state of poverty and destitution, that they were glad to find a shelter in the wretched hole in which we have just seen them, and were forced to depend for their subsistence—with the exception of the very little slop-shop work poor Sophy could get, and an occasional hour's scrubbing by Betty—upon the casual bounty of strangers, and that bounty solicited by the feeble voices of two little creatures—the elder a little more than eight, and the younger but six years old.

In his story Ketchum had concealed whatever he knew of his relationship to Sophy Ingraham, and glossed over as much as possible his mother's treatment of that unfortunate girl. As a sort of justification of his conduct towards her—something altogether

unnecessary when we consider who was his auditor—he pleaded the thoughtlessness natural to a youth of eighteen, and concluded by asking the advice of his companion as to what course he ought to pursue in regard to the child.

“Leave him where he is,” was the answer.

“O no, Brenton,” said Ketchum, earnestly, “I cannot do that. I cannot run the risk of being again asked in the street for a penny by my own son. I’ll tell you what I’ve been thinking of, and in this matter I shall want your assistance. I will endeavor to prevail upon his mother to give him up, and, if necessary, pay her well for it, and, judging from appearances, a little money would go a great way with her just now. I will then send him out to the “Purchase,” and in the family of old Schoonhoven, my *locum tenens* there, he will be respectably brought up.”

“And at a proper age introduce him to the world as your son and heir,” added Brenton, with a slight sneer.

“O no, not quite so bad as that. I certainly do not mean that he shall bear my name, nor shall any one, except yourself, know of the relationship between us. If you will but go to Sophy and cajole or bully her out of the boy—either of which, unless she is greatly altered, may be easily done—you will do me a very essential service. I can easily pass him upon Schoonhoven for an orphan that has been left to my care, and with a fair education, and a knowledge of agriculture, he will be able, when he becomes a man, to do very well for himself.”

Heartless as he was, Brenton could see nothing in this scheme, for the future usefulness and consequent happiness of the child, to oppose, and promising to do all that was required of him, they rose and left the house.



III.

NECESSITY IS THE MOTHER OF INVENTION. GRANNY GREEN'S LITTLE KATE AND HER NEW FRIENDS.

THE scraps gathered by poor Sophy in her "devious morning walk" had been nothing more than a whet to the appetites of her family, who had had no food from an early hour of the preceding day, and the old woman felt it incumbent upon her to try to procure something that would satisfy the present demands of hunger. Accordingly, throwing around her the tattered remains of a once fashionable plaid cloak, which mayhap had in its day graced the figure of a Broadway belle, and, taking the basket on her arm, she called the boys to her side, and sallied forth. But thinking that the greater the number of helpless little creatures that accompanied her, the greater would be her success in her appeals to the pity of the charitably disposed, she determined upon pressing into her service any child she might chance to meet, and for this purpose accosted a little thing that she found playing on the walk, with,

"How is de pitty ittle lady dis mornin?" using as nearly as possible the language of the child, whose bright face was turned up towards her with a smile that dimpled her rosy cheeks, as she answered,

"O, va'ee well, sank'ee, aunty."

"How is g'anma, dear?"

"G'anny abed, va'ee sick," answered the child, with a most serious face.

"Won't de ittle lady go up de street wis aunty, and git some goodies?"

"G'anny 'ill want Titty when she wake."

"But she won't wake till Titty come back," said Betty, coaxingly, "and den Titty can give g'anny some goodies, too."

The promise of "goodies" for her grandmother was sufficient to induce little Kate to consent, and putting her little fat hand into the skinny one of the old woman, went away with her in great glee.

Betty and her little brood then went from door to door, until the poor hungry boys became very tired, and little Kate began to worry to return to her grandmother, but with very indifferent success. From some houses they were turned away with harsh refusals, when gentle words might just as well have been given, for they cost as little, and what they received at others was thrown grudgingly into the old woman's basket, with less care than a kind master would give a plate of broken meat to a dog. At length, at the basement door of a small, but extremely clean looking house, which was opened to Betty's knock by a tidy Irish girl, they were invited to enter and warm them-

selves, for the children looked very cold, and the boys, who had neither shoes nor stockings, were really almost frozen.

The invitation was gladly accepted, and they followed the girl into her kitchen, where a fire of good hickory was cheerfully burning, at which she seated them; and, after placing on a chair before the old woman a cup of hot coffee with some bread and meat, and giving to each of the children a good thick slice of bread thickly buttered, she carefully locked the door of her pantry, and, putting the key into her pocket, went up stairs to the lady of the house.

This lady, who, wrapped in a large shawl, was sitting at her breakfast in a small, but neatly-furnished back parlor, might, to a stranger, have passed for thirty-five, although, in fact, not yet quite twenty-eight. Her face, which in her girlhood must have been eminently beautiful, was thin to emaciation, and pale even to ghastliness, when contrasted with the border of the black crape cap that covered her raven hair, a single curl only of which having escaped from confinement had fallen on her left cheek. She appeared tall as she sat, and though much wasted by disease of body or sickness of the mind, her figure was still good.

"Well, Judy?" she asked in a very sweet voice, as the servant entered.

"O, mem," was the reply, "there's a poor ould cratur below, wid tree of the purtiest childer you ever set eyes on. Two little boys, that luk for all the world like twins, an' a'most naked, the poor dears;

an' the weeniest bit of a garl, that's a parfect born beauty. She says they're her gran'childer; an' their mother, who's a widdy, is lyin' at home very sick, an' she's no wan in the world wide to do any thing for them, barrin' herself, poor soul! an' she wants to know if you've ever an owld gown, or a petticoat, or any thing o' that sort, that you cud give her to cover them."

"I'm afraid, Judy," said the lady with a smile, "that any clothes which I may have to spare, would be of very little use to the boys or the little girl, though they might, perhaps, serve the mother or grandmother. However, you can see if there is any thing left of the bundle I gave you last week. But before you proceed on this errand, bring up the little girl, that I may see what your 'born beauty' is like."

With joyful alacrity Judy flew to obey, and in a few minutes little Kate was introduced into the presence of the lady, who was very much pleased with the beauty of the child, and surprised to find how comfortably she was dressed; for though her frock was of a coarse stuff, it was whole and clean, and her little feet were defended against the severity of the weather by strong shoes and good woollen stockings.

Kate, much abashed at first, was unwilling to hold up her head, or answer any of the questions that were put to her. But the kindness of the lady, who spake encouragingly to her, and forced upon her acceptance a piece of toast from her own plate, in a little while reassured her, and she looked around in evident admiration of all she beheld; and when the

lady asked her her name, she answered without embarrassment,

"Titty Bally."

"Kitty Barry? That's a very pretty name. What do you call your brothers?"

"Titty dot no broder."

"Are not the little boys down stairs your brothers?"

"No, lady. Titty dot no broder."

"But the woman you came with is your grandmother?"

"No, lady. Titty g'anny sick abed."

"Is it not your mother who is sick?"

"Titty dot no mamma—she dead!" answered the child, with a melancholy shake of her little head.

"Poor little dear!" sighed the lady. "Then you live," she continued, "with this poor woman?"

"No, lady," said Kate, a little impatiently, "Titty live wis G'anny G'een."

"Who is Granny Green?"

"Titty own g'anny."

"Where does Granny Green live?"

To this question she gave in answer the name and number of the street in which she lived, with more correctness than could have been expected from one of her years, for she could not certainly have numbered more than three.

"Judy," said the lady, addressing her hand maiden, "it is my opinion that the woman down stairs is little better than an impostor."

"A *which*, mem?"

"An impostor, Judy; and has inveigled this poor child from her home, for the purpose of practising upon our feelings."

"I'll warrant now, it's jist as you say, mem, an' yet, for all that, I can't help thinkin' that the poor cratur's very much in want this blessed minute," returned the kind-hearted Judy.

"Well, step down, and bring her up to me."

The first part of this order was instantly obeyed, but the second was not so easily performed. Betty Mallison, justly fearing exposure from the artlessness of little Kate, decamped with the boys as soon as Judy had taken the child up stairs, and the poor little creature she decoyed from home, for her own purposes, was left to be returned to her grandmother or not, just as it might happen.

"If my little angel had lived," said the lady, after she had suffered Judy to "unpack her heart" with abuse of "the stravaguin' ould vagabone," as she was pleased to call the worthy Betty, "she would be just about the size of this child. But she's in heaven now."

"No misdoubt in the world of that, mem," returned Judy; "for 'twas meself that seen to the christenin' of her."

"You did, Judy; and however people may call in question the necessity of infant baptism, there is no one will dispute the disinterested kindness which prompted you, my good girl, at a late hour of a stormy night, to bring to my babe a priest of your own faith, to perform what you believed to be a sav-

ing rite." The lady was silent for a few minutes, and then resumed.

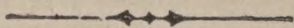
"I have been thinking, Judy, that this poor motherless little creature might, in some measure, supply to me the place of my lost darling. You shall take her home, and if the Granny Green, of whom she speaks, can be prevailed upon to give her to me, I will adopt and bring her up as my own."

"Indeed, mem," said Judy, "'twas Goodness itself, I'm thinkin', that put that thought into yer heart, for the poor child wud be much better aff wid you than in that street beyant; an' sure you'd never miss the bit or the sup you'd give her, or the duds o' clothes she'd wear, an' who knows what she wud do for you in return when I'm dead an' gone?"

"Well, Judy, take her, and wrap her up well, and return her to her grandmother; and, if you find our scheme to be practicable, we will put it into immediate execution."

Although Judy did not pretend to understand all the "dicksonary words" used by the lady, she was seldom at a loss for the meaning of any of her directions, and now proceeded with right good will to obey them. She found Granny Green the occupant of a small garret room, poorly furnished, but perfectly clean. She was sick, as the child had said, but not in bed, having risen as soon as she missed her little Kate, and was now, although staggering under a load of illness, preparing to leave the house in search of her lost treasure. Her fears for the child had been great, and as great now was her joy, and a perfect torrent

of blessings was poured upon Judy by the grateful old woman, for having restored to her "the light of her eyes and the life-pulse of her heart!"



IV.

POVERTY, THOUGH A TRIAL, IS NOT A CURSE.—
GRANNY GREEN.

GRANNY GREEN had once known the blessings of "health, peace, and competence." Her husband, a good, sober and industrious mechanic, had been an excellent provider; but he had been taken suddenly from her many years before, leaving her a widow in a strange land, with an infant in her arms, the only survivor of a numerous family. But Granny Green was then young and healthy, and being a good seamstress, supported herself and child in comparative comfort. That child grew up to womanhood, the pride and delight of her mother's heart, and richly deserving of the affection that was so lavishly bestowed upon her; and at the age of twenty became the wife of a young man of most estimable character, who held a respectable situation in one of the most considerable mercantile houses in the city. The business of his employers having taken him to the south a few months after their marriage, he there took the yellow fever and died. The news of this melancholy event was brought

to his wife by the very vessel in which she had expected his return, and the shock proving too much for one in her feeble state, she died in giving birth to little Kate.

Undue exertion had some time before much impaired the sight of Granny Green, and now, that she was called upon to provide for the little orphan, she was no longer able to obtain a livelihood by her needle. But she neither arraigned the providence of God, nor sat down idly and bewailed her own helplessness. With the little money that remained after defraying the expenses of her daughter's funeral, she furnished a stand with apples, cakes, nuts, and things of that kind, by the sale of which she was able to keep herself and her infant charge above want; and though her business had now, in consequence of her illness, been several days suspended, she had neither solicited aid from others, nor incurred the debt of a single cent.

When Judy first broke to her the wish of the lady in regard to the child, the pale face of the poor old woman wore a most troubled look, and she remained silent for a minute or two, as if debating with herself what reply she ought to make. At length she answered,

"Tell the lady that I am not insensible to the kindness of her offer, and from my very heart I thank her for it. But I cannot accept it. I know I have not long to live, but, for the little time I am to remain here, life would be deprived of all that makes it valuable if I were to lose my little darling. She has

lain in my bosom every night since her birth, and my heart would be cold without her. Besides, it is my wish that she should be brought up in the faith of all belonging to her, and I know too well the little store that is set by that faith in this country; and I hope, when I am taken from her, that she may find a home in the asylum under the care of the good Sisters of Charity, who will be sure to teach her the way she should go."

"O, if it's the religion that's troublin' you, don't give yerself any onasiness on that score. I'm a Catholic mesef, though, to my shame be it spoken, a very poor wan, and I'll see that she's brought up in the right way, an' I know the lady 'ill never object to that, for though she's nothin', God help her! she hasn't the laste dislike in the world to our Church, for didn't she let me bring the clargy to christen her own babe when it was a dyin'? a thing she wudn't 'a done, you know, if she didn't like huz. Then, av coorse, she'll never hinder me from bringin' up the little dear in the religion of her forefathers. Now, supposin' the lady was to give her hand an' word that she wud bring her up as you wud wish, an' wud never ax to take her from you as long as you cud keep her—an' that you may live to be over her many a long day to come!—wud you be willin' to give her to her when it shall please the Lord to take you to himself?"

"I would not only be willing," answered Granny Green, "but with my dying breath would thank her for her kindness to the homeless orphan."

"Well, then, never mind. I'll settle it all. Now

go you to bed, an' I'll fix you somethin' 'ill fasten the life in you. An', that no other stravaguin ould vagabone may coax the darlin' away wid her while you sleep, I'll jist take her back home wid me, an' make her an' the lady a little better acquainted."

The lady was happy to get the child, even on Granny Green's conditions; and from that time until the day of the old woman's death, little Kate spent most of her waking hours in her new home, although she was brought back every night to sleep under the roof with her grandmother. But she no longer lay in her bosom. The cold, too long neglected, was now changed to a hasty consumption, and the physician, who had been called in by Kate's new mamma, would not permit the little orphan any longer to share the bed of the dying woman. This was at first considered hard by both the invalid and her pet; but both in a little while became reconciled to it; and this partial separation rendered the final one less difficult to be borne by the youthful survivor.

V.

MONEY, THE LEVER OF ARCHIMEDES, CAN MOVE THE WORLD. THE OFFER AND ITS ACCEPTANCE. A MOTHER'S GRIEF.

ABOUT the time that the lady was first brought by Judy into the garret of Granny Green, being about

seven o'clock in the evening of the day on which she had made the acquaintance of little Kate, a person in a dark box coat, buttoned up to his chin, and a glazed cap, drawn down over his eyes, entered the BROWN JUG, a low porter house immediately opposite the cellar occupied by the Mallisons. The ground floor of this house was divided into two rooms, the outer of which was the bar, containing a couple of long benches, a few stools, or rather backless chairs, and two or three unpainted pine tables, on which were lying packs of very dirty cards, some boxes of dominoes, and pieces of chalk; and the inner was a kind of saloon, in which a number of ill-mannered, ill-looking fellows, and tawdrily dressed girls, were dancing to the screechings of a miserably cracked fiddle, played on by a lame and almost blind old negro, whose livelihood depended upon the pitiful contributions of the frequenters of a house like this.

Having called for a glass of beer, the stranger, while pretending to drink it, entered into conversation with the landlord upon that strange and most important topic—the weather, and after discussing the last snow storm, and offering some shrewd conjectures upon the probability of rather unsettled weather for some time to come, concluded by asking his host if he could tell him the name of the woman who occupied the opposite cellar.

“There’s two on them,” was the answer.

“I mean the younger.”

“Well, there’s no difference in them in one respect. Their name is Mallison.”

"Then the young woman is married?"

"That she is, to her misfortin."

"So I should suppose, if her husband can afford her no better home than that cellar. Has she any children?"

"Yes, two, so near of a size they'd pass for twins, yet folks *do* say that both han't the same right to the name they bear," said the fellow, with a knowing wink.

"I have particular reasons," continued the stranger, "for wishing to see young Mrs. Mallison. Do you think I could do so?"

"Not knowing, can't say," he answered with an attempt at jocularly. "But here's her husband; maybe he can tell you." And at that moment Mallison entered.

"George," he continued, "here's a gentleman what has got something *very* particular to say to your wife!" and he laughed a short, discordant laugh, that grated harshly on the ear of the stranger.

"Well, sir," said Mallison, roughly, "what have you to say to my wife?"

"Nothing, Mr. Mallison," he answered, "that cannot as well be said to her husband. But before we proceed to business, let us have something to moisten our lips." Hereupon he called for another glass of beer—although he had contrived, while talking to the man in the bar, to spill most of the former into a box of bar-room sweepings at his feet—and found it no difficult matter to prevail upon Mallison to drink to their better acquaintance, which he did in "a horn" as he called it, of brandy.

The stranger then withdrawing with his new acquaintance to the farthest table, opened the conversation by saying,

“ Mine is a strange errand, Mr. Mallison, but knowing that I have to deal with one who understands the world, I have no fear that any misconstruction will be put upon my motives. The truth is, a friend of mine—an odd sort of fellow, but one who is rich enough to pay for the gratification of his humors—has taken a fancy to a child of yours—the elder, I think, of your boys—that he happened to meet in the street, and wishes very much to adopt him. I know it is asking a great deal of a parent to give up his child to a stranger—particularly his first born—but knowing the ability of my friend to provide handsomely for the boy, and fearing that times are not as good with you as they ought to be, I must honestly say, that I do not think anything could happen more advantageous to all parties. It would gratify the benevolent feelings of my friend; secure a comfortable home to the child, and relieve you from a burthen which, at present, you seem very ill able to bear.”

“ But see here, Mister,” interposed Mallison, “ han’t your friend got no name?”

“ He has a name,” was the answer, in the same conciliating tone in which the stranger had hitherto spoken, “ but I do not feel myself at liberty to give it, until I know how his offers are likely to be received.”

“ Well then,” said Mallison, doggedly, “ we’ll talk no more about it. I’m not a goin’ to deal with a man in a mask.”

"Nay, though contrary to my instructions, I cannot withhold from you what you have a perfect right to know. His name is —— Ketchum."

"Edward Ketchum?"

"Yes."

"Hah!" exclaimed Mallison, with an oath, "I thought as much! But look here, *Mister Ketchum*——," he added, starting to his feet, clenching his fists tightly, setting his teeth firmly, and looking fiercely into the face of the stranger; when he was interrupted by the latter quietly saying,

"I am not the man you take me for."

"You're sure o' that?"

"Perfectly," answered the stranger with a smile.

"'Tis well you a'n't," muttered Mallison, as he re-seated himself. "But," he continued, "though you a'n't Ketchum, I dare say you know all about him, and the rascally trick he played the poor girl that was brought up with him—his cousin into the bargain—now my wife? and that the boy, that passes for my oldest, is in fact his own son?"

"You surprise me, Mr. Mallison," said Brenton, for he it was, as you have all, no doubt, supposed from the first. "I had no idea that my friend had any further interest in this child, than any stranger might have in one that should happen to please him for the moment." And all this was uttered with such an air of truth that Mallison, who certainly was not disposed to receive without scruples all that he might hear, did not for a moment doubt his assertion, and his wrathful feelings towards the friend of Ketchum were considerably mollified.

"Well," said he, "now that you *do* know the nature of that man's interest in the boy, what course would you advise me to take?"

"Why," he replied, with a look of the utmost candor, "if I were in your place, I would most certainly wash my hands of the business at once, by insisting upon the father taking care of his child, for it is clearly the duty of every man to provide for his own."

"Oh, yes. But recollect, that boy has cost me a great deal to bring up so far."—Brenton thought of the street and the cellar, and could scarcely help laughing in the man's face—"and he'll soon be big enough now to help me work, and so pay me back a part of what I've spent on him."

"Well, now, supposing that Ketchum should be willing to *pay* you at once, for the trouble and expense you have been at?"

"Why, there's suthin in that, to be sure," murmured Mallison, as if debating with himself the subject proposed for his consideration. Brenton saw his advantage, and followed it up by saying,

"I have no doubt he will be willing to remunerate you handsomely for what you have done. Indeed I do not think he would mind a hundred dollars—"

"A hundred dollars!" exclaimed Mallison. "Let me tell you, sir, that two hundred, no, nor three nyther, wouldn't pay me for the care I've took of that boy."

"Well, Mr. Mallison, if I can prevail upon my friend—who, though rich, is by no means over ready to part with his cash—to pay into your hands the sum

of two hundred dollars, may I tell him that you are willing to relinquish all claim to the child?"

"Make it fifty more, and you may."

"Well then, two hundred and fifty be it," said Brenton, rising; "and if at eight o'clock to-morrow evening you will call at No. — Greenwich street, and ask for Mr. Jones, you shall receive the money. But upon one condition. You must sign a document in which you shall pledge yourself never to claim the boy, nor even appear to know him, if by any chance you should meet hereafter."

"O, that I'll do," returned Mallison, with every appearance of satisfaction.

"But," resumed Brenton, returning after he had proceeded as far as the door, "there is one thing I had forgotten. It is necessary he should have something decent to wear. Here is money; and before you bring him over, take him to Chatham street, and get him a new rig." And putting ten dollars into Mallison's hand, he departed.

George Mallison went home early that night, and, contrary to his wont, went home sober; for though he changed one of the notes given him by Brenton, it was only to procure a few articles for supper, with which he surprised his wife and delighted his mother and the children. But though sober, he was not a whit more pleasant than usual, and seemed in no humor to encourage the frolics of the boys, the younger of whom was as full of tricks as a little monkey, but hurried them off to their beds, to which they were soon followed by old Betty; and not until the

breathing of the trio assured him that they slept, did he communicate to Sophy his interview with Brenton, and the determination to which that interview had led. That determination she strove with arguments, entreaties, and even with tears, to change, but all in vain; and yielded at last, not to the reasons, but to the commands of her husband. Poor Sophy!

The next day—the short day of midwinter—was painfully long to both husband and wife; for the former, although he strove to stifle, could not silence altogether the voice within, that was continually crying out in condemnation of the outrage against nature in the act he meditated; and the heart of the latter was too full for utterance, but, with a meek submission to what she deemed inevitable, she sat herself down to adapt the few articles of second-hand clothing, that had been purchased in the morning, to the use for which they were intended.

Evening at length came. All without was cold and dark; and within—to one at least—all was desolate. The scanty supper was hastily and silently despatched, when Mallison, rising, bade Jeff prepare to attend him. The child obeyed without a word, although he wondered why, if he was going out as usual to beg, he should put on his new clothes. But, as they reached the door, the steps of the father and son were arrested by a sudden cry from Sophy, who, springing towards them, threw herself on her knees at the feet of her husband.

“George,” she sobbed, “*dear* George, do not this dreadful wrong! Leave me my child. We may be

poor—wretched, for a while; but better days will come. I am hourly growing stronger, and shall soon be able to work again. In a little while these boys will help us. Then do not separate us. Take not all that makes life endurable;—leave me my child!”

“Get up!” said Mallison harshly, trying, under a show of anger to conceal emotions which he thought derogatory to his manhood, “and don’t play no more of your tragedy capers here;” and pulling the child after him, quitted the cellar.

For many minutes after the door closed between her and her child, poor Sophy remained on her knees, and wept as one that “would not be comforted.” Then she became sensible of a little arm being entwined around her neck, and of a little cheek being pressed close to hers, and she heard in a young and tremulous voice,

“Mammy, Washy is here.”

“My poor, poor darling! my only treasure now!” she exclaimed, folding to her heart the little creature, who had taken this means to arrest her attention; and, though she did not cease to weep, her grief became less absorbing and less loud.

VI.

MAN LOVES POWER. THE FOUNDER OF A FAMILY.

NEAR the close of the eighteenth century, the grandfather of Edward Ketchum—a native of one of the Eastern Colonies, or States, as they are now called—became, by an easy purchase, the owner of a large tract of land in a part of the State of New York then very little known, but which has since risen into considerable importance. It had been held by the former proprietor by a grant from the Crown; and from a wish to show by what means it had come into the hands of the present owner, as well as to perpetuate the name of his family, he dignified it with the title of “KETCHUM PURCHASE.” This he divided into farms, which he leased, upon very favorable terms, to men of small means, which drew around him a number of dependants, whose industry tended to increase the value of his property, and whose constant appeals to himself, in all matters of dispute, served to keep alive in his heart the consciousness of power.

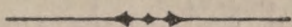
He had reserved to himself one farm, of a few hundred acres, which he intended as a model for the rest; every rood of which was kept in the most admirable condition. No fallen trees were allowed to lie and rot in the woodlands; the pastures were clear of all rank and unwholesome grasses; and you could hardly have found in the meadows a stone as big as a wren’s egg.

The fields were well fenced ; the fruit and ornamental trees kept pruned, and free from insects, and the gardens beautifully laid out, and most carefully attended. All these things were subjects of great self-gratulation to him, who was ambitious of becoming the founder of a family, that was one day to rank with the Van Rensselaers, the Livingstons, the Schuylers, and others, who were then looked up to as the great ones of this little world, and that this family should have something more than fields, however well cultivated, to boast of, he built, a few years after, on an eminence, from which it could look proudly down upon the plebian residences of his tenantry, a large, staring square mansion of brick, painted all over of a fiery red, which, with its numerous outhouses of the same color, had, if not a very pleasing, certainly a very striking effect.

General Ketchum, so he was called in his neighborhood—and, as he had been in some way attached to the army, for it was in the army he was said to have made his money—how was not exactly known—it is possible that he had a right to be so called—General Ketchum had been married before he left his native place, but was a widower, with one child, when he took possession of his new home ; and, for many years, was too much occupied with his farm and his house to think of a second matrimonial engagement. But think of it he at length did, when his house was completed, and he felt the want of a housekeeper, particularly after he had become acquainted with the pretty Patty Ogden, when on a visit of business to the city of New York. He became a suitor for the fair hand

of the dowerless beauty, and soon had reason to flatter himself with being a successful one; for the lady had all but promised to become his, when he was indiscreet enough to introduce his son—now a fine young man—to his intended mother-in-law. The young people were mutually smitten with each other; and, for once, affection, or fancy, got the better of worldly prudence in the heart of Miss Patty, and the father was rejected for the sake of the son.

To the eye of the world, General Ketchum took the matter lightly, and made a handsome provision for the young couple upon their marriage. But he never forgot, nor forgave, the falsehood of his mistress; for years after, having survived his son, that his property should not fall into the hands of his daughter-in-law, he declared in his Will, that, if his grandson should die without lawful issue, the whole of his estate should go to his cousin, Thomas Hooper, or his nearest male descendant.



VII.

CHANGE MAKES CHANGE. SOME ACCOUNT OF AN OLD
FRIEND WITH A NEW NAME.

EDWARD KETCHUM was a mere lad when his grandfather died; and the vast property to which he was heir, had been left to the management of the Schoonhoven of whom mention has already been made, until

he should reach his majority. And so well did he discharge the duties of the trust which had been confided to him, that, when the owner became of age, the honest and efficient agent was continued in his place, and left in possession of the family mansion, which was seldom visited by Ketchum or his mother, except for a short time in the summer, when they endeavored to make the country endurable, by filling the house with their fashionable friends.

To the care of this good man, and his kind old wife, little Jeff, under a new name, was committed; and, though he often thought with regret of the home he had left—poor and miserable as it was—and sometimes wept for the mother and the brother from whom he had been so unaccountably separated, the comforts that surrounded him, and the unvarying kindness with which he was treated, soon obliterated from his young mind all memory of the past; and in learning to answer to his new name, forgot that he had ever known any other.

The instructions of Schoonhoven had been, to educate the boy respectably, and to teach him whatever was necessary to the management of a farm, as he was destined for a useful rather than a brilliant career in life, having no friends upon whom he had any positive claims for assistance, being indebted solely to the generosity of Ketchum, who had known his parents, for his present maintenance. The worthy agent endeavored to fulfil these instructions to the letter. Nor were his endeavors unrewarded with success. At the age of twenty, Alfred Spencer, so I must for the fu-

ture call our friend Jeff, was as well acquainted with English literature, and as good an agriculturist as any youth in the country. But he possessed other advantages, besides those of a good library, and a practical knowledge of farming. The periodical visits of the Ketchums and their friends naturally brought him acquainted with many young men, whose intercourse with the educated and refined, had given a polish to their manners, which he would have looked for in vain among those of his own immediate class; and he endeavored to acquire something of this polish, without, however, attempting to copy the frivolity and vices of those to whom it belonged. In this he was eminently successful, and Alfred was soon looked upon by his rustic compeers as

“The glass of fashion and the mould of form.”

Yet, notwithstanding his forgetfulness of the past, and due appreciation of the many blessings of his present condition, the situation of the young man was by no means an enviable one. The great want of our nature—the want of kindred—could not be satisfied in him. Schoonhoven was a good, but rather formal old man, and his wife, though really a kind-hearted woman, had rather an ungracious way with her; and these faults of manner, which in parents would not have been thought worthy of notice, or looked upon, at the worst, as rather unpleasant peculiarities, had a chilling effect upon a young and ardent heart, that was yearning for sympathy; and the isolation of his

state became to him day by day a subject of more constant and more painful thought. It is true, he would at times enter, with all the ardor of his age, into the sports and pleasures of those around him. But these moments of sunshine were followed by hours of the densest gloom, when he studiously avoided the haunts of men, to lose himself amid the mighty forest, that still rose up to defend the Purchase from the incursions of the northern invader.

In one of his rambles, having passed through the forest, he came upon a small village that lay nestling in the bosom of a beautiful valley. His curiosity prompted him to take a nearer view of this Tempe, for which purpose he was obliged to cross a brook scarcely two yards wide, that ran at the foot of the hill on which he stood. To leap this was certainly no great feat; and, in making the attempt, he succeeded with perfect ease. But alighting on a stone that had been loosened by late rains, it turned with him, and he sprained his ankle so severely, that he was able to proceed but a few rods, when he was obliged to sit down.

This leap and its result had been witnessed from a clump of bushes, by a young girl and her companion, a woman of forty, who were gathering berries for the tea-table; and both now came forward to offer their assistance; an offer that was as gratefully accepted as it was considerately made; and with many apologies for the trouble he was giving, and condemnations of his own heedlessness, he limped away towards the village with all the grace attainable.

VIII.

WOMAN'S INFLUENCE IS SOON FELT.

THE house to which Alfred had been conducted by his kind supporters, was at the outskirts of the village, and one of the most considerable dwellings in the neighborhood; being, although of wood, very substantially built, of two stories, with a handsome piazza running along the entire front, green shutters, and painted of a pure white. He was met at the door by a lady of prepossessing appearance, to whom the younger of his companions, with a very grave face, but rather mischievous twinkle of the eye, related the cause of his mishap, and asked that something might be done for his immediate relief. Thereupon he was taken into a handsome parlor, and seated in a comfortable arm-chair; and while they are preparing the bone-set and vinegar, with the necessary bandages for the sprained limb, I will endeavor to introduce the females present more particularly to your notice.

Mrs. Rollins, such was the name by which the lady was known among her neighbors, was, apparently, not less than fifty, although in reality much younger, of a figure still good, though certainly not what it had been, and with features still fine, although, it must be admitted, her beauty was rather on the wane. She

passed for a widow; but as she never alluded, even the most remotely, to the "dear departed," her claim to this title was often questioned by the gossips of the village, who, however, were wise enough to keep their opinions from the knowledge of the stranger, who, besides, being a very useful person in the way of lending—and every one knows what inveterate borrowers a certain class of our countrywomen are—every now and then, assembled them all at her house, and gave, as every one would allow, an excellent cup of tea. The next in apparent age to Mrs. Rollins, was the "Help," a stout, rather coarse-featured, but extremely good-natured looking woman of forty, who was looked upon, not only in, but out of the house, as a principal member of the family; and the youngest of all, was a girl of not more than eighteen summers; whose lithe and graceful form, fair and laughing face, merry hazel eyes, and locks of raven blackness, which fell in a profusion of natural curls over her neck and shoulders, could not fail to attract the attention and admiration of the most careless beholder, and no one who had looked upon her once, would be willing to deny himself the pleasure of looking upon her a second time.

The young man's sprain proved much more serious than any one had at first expected; and for three days he was a trespasser on the hospitality of Mrs. Rollins, who had taken the precaution to apprise his friends of the cause of his absence, by sending a message by Judy, the help, over to the Purchase, the morning after the accident. But though a prisoner, time was

not suffered to hang heavily on his hands. The library of Mrs. Rollins was not large; but, with some of the light reading of the day, it contained many volumes of rare excellence, which were new to her guest; and the conversation of the ladies, which run

“From grave to gay, from lively to severe,”

had something in it so new and delightful to him, that he almost wished his sprain had proved a fracture, that he might have a valid excuse for prolonging his stay.

IX.

LOVE'S YOUNG DREAM.

ON the morning of the fourth day, Alfred returned home. But fearing he had not appeared sufficiently grateful to Mrs. Rollins, for the kindness she had shown him, he made it his business, two days after, to recross the mountain,—as the hill was called which separated the village of Iphigenia from the Purchase—that he might repeat to her his thanks, and beg Judy's acceptance of a handsome green calico dress, which he had purchased for her of an Irish pedlar. His acquaintance with Mrs. and Miss Rollins was the commencement of a new era in the life of Alfred. He was no longer the moody, solitary being he had

been. Existence now possessed to him a positive value. A flower had sprung up amid the arid wastes that surrounded him. A star had at last broken through the dense clouds which had shut the heavens from his view. Not a week—scarcely a day—passed that he had not a book to borrow, or return, or to lend; or a flower or a plant to take over, that was peculiarly suited to the soil of Mrs. Rollins's garden; or a song, left perhaps by some of the fair visitors at the Purchase, which he thought might please Miss Rollins, who both sang and played delightfully. In short, Alfred Spencer was most incontrovertibly in love with Catherine Rollins.

In the beautiful tale of "Undine" we are told, that, until she loves, the heroine is without a soul. So was it with Alfred. Or, to speak more correctly, until he found himself in love, he was not conscious of the possession of one. Although naturally religious, and fond of vaguely contemplating the Deity in the wonders of creation, his mind had never been directed to the consideration of his own immortality, or the tremendous price which had been paid for the redemption of man. It is true, that, in his childhood, good old Mrs. Schoonhoven often spoke to him of such places as heaven and hell, the future abodes of the good and the bad, and urged him to seek the one and avoid the other, which could be done only by a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures; a knowledge that poor Alfred was afraid he never should acquire, for though he had read them diligently for a long time, he could not pretend to understand them at all. It is true also,

that he frequently accompanied his guardian and his wife to meeting; but there was something so lifeless—so merely external in the religious exercises there gone through, that he always returned with feelings of weariness, not to say of disgust. But the beautiful service of the Catholic chapel, to which, for Kate's sake, he now generally went, and the earnest devotion of the small congregation, had in them a vitality for which, among religious people and religious observances, he had hitherto looked in vain; and, like many of the poor and ignorant around him, he was in truth a Christian before he was well able to give a reason for the faith that was in him.

Alfred was, indeed, in love with Catherine Rollins, and, this, too, long before he would have acknowledged to himself the possibility of such a thing. But when the certainty of this fact did force itself upon him—by the jealous twinge he experienced whenever any one of his own sex approached her, who might stand in the way of a rival to him—it brought with it at first no feeling of pleasure. Few ills in life are less endurable to the very young than unrequited love. And how could he hope for a return of the affection he had so foolishly cherished, until it had obtained a perfect mastery over him, from one who, to become the sharer of his humble lot, must abandon the elegances, the refinements, and the endearments of a home in which she reigned with undisputed supremacy? Or how could he expect—even were it possible for Kate to bestow a thought on one so unworthy of her—that Mrs. Rollins—a lady,

no doubt, of honorable lineage—would give the child she loved with such engrossing affection, and whom she had educated to adorn the most exalted station, to one like him—poor—friendless—nameless? It was not to be thought of! And yet he did think of it. It is true he was now poor, friendless, nameless, as he said; but did it follow that he was always to be so? Industry and enterprise are, in this country at least, seldom without their reward. Talent and integrity will always secure friends. And the only name worth possessing, is to be obtained by any one ambitious of it—the name of an honest man. Truly, indeed, may it be said that

“Hope is the lover’s staff;”

and with this staff did Alfred contrive to support himself under the many difficulties of his situation.

Certain it is, that Alfred Spencer was in love with Catherine Rollins. But was Catherine Rollins in love with him? To this I am hardly prepared to answer in the affirmative. It is true, that his approach appeared always to give her pleasure; and his failure in coming, when she had reason to expect him, produced a feeling of disappointment which she was not always successful in concealing. But, then, it seemed that she wished for his presence for nothing but to torment him, which she did in a thousand ways; yet so good-humoredly, withal, that although she seriously tried his patience at times, he found it impossible to become really angry with her, and was often forced to join in the laugh which had been raised at his ex-

pense. In Mrs. Rollins, however, he had a never-failing friend; who, when she could not aid him in parrying the mischievous attacks of her daughter, enabled him to effect an honorable retreat. But a circumstance now occurred which—with rather an untoward opening—dissipated forever all the doubts that for many months past he had suffered to annoy him.

X.

“THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE NEVER DID RUN SMOOTH.” AN INTERFERENCE, AND ITS RESULT.

ONE Sunday afternoon, as Alfred, with Mrs. and Miss Rollins, were returning from vespers at the chapel of the Holy Name, he was met in the road by two gentlemen on horseback, who proved to be Ketchum and Brenton, in whom fifteen years and better, had made but little apparent change. They were now on their annual visit to the Purchase, and were, of course, instantly recognized by the young man, who bowed slightly, while they, in deference, no doubt, to the ladies, raised their hats and bent almost to the necks of their horses as they passed. At this moment the eyes of Mrs. Rollins and Brenton met, and a strange expression passed over the features of each. Surprise and anger were visible in the face of the gentleman, who reined in his horse for a mo-

ment as if to stop, but immediately striking his spurs into him, rode on at a brisker pace than before; while the lady, becoming deadly pale, would, but for the ready support of Alfred and her daughter, have fallen to the earth. These signs of mutual and painful recognition could not escape the notice of the young people, but delicacy forbade them to make any audible comment thereon, and in wondering silence they assisted Mrs. Rollins home.

"Master Alf," said Ketchum, laughing, as soon as they were out of hearing of the ladies, "has proven his claim to the Ketchum blood, by his taste in female beauty. Did you notice the very pretty girl the rascal had in tow? But what's the matter? He has not turned out a rival, I hope? Why, man, your brow is like a thunder cloud."

"To tell the truth," replied his companion, speaking through his clenched teeth, "I never was in worse humor in my life. I have been deceived—outwitted—by a woman for whose capacity I have always had the most thorough contempt. You saw the elder of those females? That was Susan Rollins. And the child that I was, over and over again, assured had died in its infancy, I find here grown up to womanhood, and in terms of intimacy with—" He stopped.

"*My son*," added Ketchum, a little proudly.

"Yes, your son, and the son of *Sophy Mallison*," retorted Brenton, bitterly.

The color mounted to the cheek of Ketchum, but he checked the reply that rose to his lips, and the rest of the way was pursued in silence.

The next day, while Alfred was mowing by himself in a meadow near the house, he was joined by Brenton, who, after a few trifling remarks upon the work in which he found him engaged, said to him:

"May I ask, you, Mr. Spencer, how long you have been acquainted with the ladies whom I saw you with yesterday?"

"About a year," was the answer of the young man, while a sudden blush deepened for a moment the healthful brown of his cheek.

"Indeed! Your visits, I suppose, are both frequent and welcome?"

"Not very frequent, sir. Once or twice a week, perhaps. How welcome they are, I cannot say. Mrs. Rollins, however, is always very kind."

"And the young lady? She is *kind*, too, is she not?"

"Miss Rollins could not be unkind to any one. But I cannot flatter myself that she is kinder to me than to others."

"Yet, or I am much mistaken, you have hopes of one day making her your wife."

"This is a subject, Mr. Brenton, on which I will suffer no man to jest," returned Alfred, with the air of one who was not to be trifled with.

"I am in no jesting humor, young man," said Brenton, haughtily. "But, in sober seriousness, I now tell you, that if you have ever dared to think of this young lady as anything more than an acquaintance, you must think so no longer."

"*Dared* to think, sir? Whatever my thoughts may

have been, is known only to my own heart; and, but for this strange interference with that in which you have no right to meddle—”

“But I have a right.”

“None, at least, that I will acknowledge. But for this uncalled-for interference, I should never, perhaps, have ventured to whisper, even to myself, the thoughts and hopes that have given a joy to my existence never known until now. The silence I have long, and with much difficulty, maintained, you force me to break; and I most solemnly declare that I will not only *dare* to think of Miss Rollins as one day to be mine, but will use every honest means to make her so, unless her own lips shall bid me to forego all hope.”

“This is all very fine,” said Brenton, with a sneer, “and would sound well from the hero of a melo drama. But ’tis not exactly to my taste. I am not likely to be turned from my purpose by a well-rounded period or two. Take the advice of one who certainly wishes you no ill. Give up all thought of this Miss Rollins, as she is called, and choose for yourself some honest farmer’s daughter. By so doing, you will secure in me a firm and useful friend; while, by acting counter to my commands, you will make for yourself an enemy, whose vengeance will pursue you to the last moment of your life.” So saying he turned upon his heel, and whistling a bar or two of a popular air, walked towards the house, while poor Alfred stood looking after him, leaning on his scythe, with indignation and perplexity strongly blended in his handsome and ingenuous countenance.

He felt that a crisis in his fate had now arrived; and he was not long in deciding how to act. Leaving his work at an early hour of the afternoon, and dressing himself with unusual care, he walked over to the village. As he approached the house of Mrs. Rollins, he saw Brenton come out, mount a horse that had been fastened to the paling, and ride away. For a moment his heart sank within him. The presence of this man at such a time he looked upon as an augury of evil. But, with a determination to know the worst at once, he quickened his pace, and entered the house, where he found Mrs. Rollins alone in the parlor, in evident perturbation, and with traces of recent tears on her cheeks. He was about to retire when she prevented him by saying, as she extended to him her hand,

"I am glad you are come, Mr. Spencer. I was afraid we should have to leave without seeing you."

"Leave, madam? Are you then going to leave us?" he asked, with much surprise.

"For a time, at least," she answered mournfully. "The peace, which I have for the last few years enjoyed in this sequestered nook, has been suddenly and rudely broken in upon; and I am forced to abandon the home in which I had hoped to spend the remnant of a life, that has been anything but a happy one, to seek, in some distant scene, a refuge from the persecution with which I am now threatened."

"What persecution, madam? Do you fear persecution from Mr. Brenton?"

"Unhappily, I do."

"May I know why?"

"It is a long story, with which you may one day become acquainted; but not now. I knew not, until yesterday, that Mr. Brenton ever visited this neighborhood. This I learned from what you said, after our return from vespers, of his intimacy with Mr. Ketchum. To avoid the risk of a second encounter, I made up my mind last night to make the excursion to Canada which I have had for some time in contemplation; and his visit to-day has only hastened the execution of my plan. We leave early in the morning."

"But you will soon return?"

"That is uncertain. My only wish at present is to avoid this man; and my return to, or total abandonment of this place, depends altogether upon his movements. But believing that you feel sufficient interest in one who has few to care for her, to wish to know something of our future plans, I will write in a few weeks, and let you know them."

"Ah, madam," he replied, "you little know the deep interest I feel in all that concerns you and yours. You will think me very presumptuous, I fear;—but, though your judgment may condemn, your goodness, I am sure, will pardon me. It is not to be expected, that one with eyes to see, and a heart to appreciate, the many beauties of mind and person that are so conspicuous in Miss Rollins, could be acquainted with and not admire her. I, at least, could not. But a just sense of her merits, and my own unworthiness, has hitherto kept me silent. But I can remain silent

no longer. I cannot think of being separated from her, without knowing whether I may not hope—at some future day—when, by honorable exertion, I shall have raised myself above the state of miserable dependence in which I have been placed—to claim an interest in her affections, and have my claim allowed. Dear madam, do not, at least, forbid me to *hope*!”

“I do not. What the feelings of my daughter are, I cannot pretend to know. But I do not think them unfavorable to you. If she does not bid you despair, neither will I. The decision, however, must come from herself. She is now in the garden. Seek her there; and let me know on your return how you have sped.”

Alfred followed the first part of her directions at once; but an hour, and more, elapsed before he returned to report progress. Mrs. Rollins looked up from some papers she was arranging in a small desk that lay open before her, and smiled as she read in his countenance the result of his interview with her daughter. Neither spoke for a minute or two; but the warm kiss he imprinted on the beautiful hand she had held out to him, told the joy and gratitude with which his heart was overflowing. At length the lady said,

“You did not find Kate inexorable, then?”

“She is an angel!” was his rapturous reply.

“Of course,” returned Mrs. Rollins, laughing. “We are all angels—till we are wed. But, *badinage* apart, let me know what is arranged between you.”

“Nothing.”

"Nothing?"

"Nothing. Everything, dear madam, is left to you. With your approbation, she has promised to become mine, as soon as circumstances will justify our union in the eyes of the world, upon one condition."

"And that is?"

"That if, after serious inquiry into the tenets of her faith, I can, from honest conviction, subscribe to them. I assured her I could do so already. But she insists, that religion is a matter of too much importance for man to be guided by his feelings in the choice of it; and that her husband, must not only be of her own creed, but must be able to defend it, when wantonly attacked by ignorance or malevolence."

"Dear Kate!" exclaimed Mrs. Rollins with affectionate admiration, "that is so like her! Without one spark of bigotry in her nature—one feeling of unkindness or illiberality towards any sect or people—so strong is her attachment to her own religion, that there is no earthly consideration which she would for a moment place in competition with it. What she believes God requires of her, that she will do at any sacrifice."

"How much, my dear madam, is she indebted for this singleness of purpose to the early teachings of her mother?"

"No, Mr. Spencer."

"Why not call me Alfred?" he asked.

"No, Alfred. So far from being indebted to me for this devotion to the creed she professes, it is to her

instrumentality I owe the happiness I now enjoy—of being a member of that body of which Christ is the head. This, however, is part of the story you have yet to hear, and I will not now enter upon it. All I will say at present is—follow Kate's directions; and, if ever you are in a condition to claim the hand of my daughter, you need have no fears that my consent will be withheld. Heaven bless you!"

At an early hour next morning, Mrs. Rollins, her daughter, and the "help," took seats in the stage that passed through Iphigenia to W——, to return no more. The house was soon after let; and the furniture which could not be easily removed, was sold by a stranger, who came as Mrs. Rollins's attorney; and in a little while the most inveterate gossip in the village ceased to speak of Mrs. Rollins and her affairs.

The certainty of possessing the love, and the conditional promise of the hand of Miss Rollins, were sufficient to urge Alfred to follow to the letter the directions he had received. A farm belonging to the Purchase was now vacant, through the foolish ambition of the son of the late lessee, who, with the hope of becoming a gentleman, had abandoned the safe and honorable pursuits of agriculture to engage in commerce. This Alfred was allowed to take upon very favorable terms; and, in less than two years, by untiring industry and admirable management, had made it one of the most beautiful and productive farms of the estate. But, while he cultivated the earth with so much care, he did not suffer his mind or his heart to lie fallow. For the improvement of

the one, he devoted a portion of his time to a careful perusal of the English classics; and for the other, studied to know and to practice the duties inculcated by that religion with which he had promised to make himself acquainted—a promise which, with the grace of heaven, and the kind instructions of the exemplary pastor of the church of the Holy Name, he was fully able to keep. But, in all this time, was he ignorant of the whereabouts of his beloved? *Nous verrons.* At present let us return to the fair city of Gotham, where, after an absence of seventeen years, our presence may very well be required.

XI.

THERE IS NOTHING IMPOSSIBLE TO PERSEVERANCE.
SOME FURTHER ACCOUNT OF MRS. KETCHUM AND
HER SON.

SEVENTEEN years! It is a long time—to look forward to! Almost one fourth of the ordinary life of man. Nearly one half of the earthly existence of a Burns and a Byron;—more than that of a Shelly;—and the far greater part of that of a Kirk White, a Keats, and a Dermody—and of one greater than any or all of these—the blessed Aloysius de Gonzaga. It was little more than seventeen years from the time that Napoleon assumed the command of the army in

Italy, until the defeat of this same Napoleon in the fatal field of Waterloo, and yet volumes, scarcely to be numbered, have been filled with the glories and disasters of those few brief years! Seventeen years, then, could not have passed over any of those who, in the preceding part of this story, have been introduced to your notice, without leaving some traces of their footsteps. Yet the changes they had effected in some of our acquaintances were really less than one would be likely to suppose. Mrs. Ketchum was a little less active than we have heretofore seen her. But what she had lost in activity was gained in intolerance. In her advertisements for servants now—and they were frequent—were always found the words “No Irish or Catholics need apply.” So far, indeed, had she carried her proscriptive policy, that her son, who certainly had arrived at years of maturity, if not of discretion, was obliged, for the sake of peace, to part with an excellent servant, who had had the independence to assert his right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, instead of Mrs. Ketchum’s, and to engage a smooth-faced, canting fellow, who had come recommended to the old lady by the reverend editor of a certain hebdomadal, in which the refuted calumnies of a by-gone age were unblushingly put forth as modern truths. Her son appeared very little changed for the worse. His complexion had become rather florid, perhaps, and a keen eye might have detected, among the thick curls of his dark brown locks, and in his well-trimmed whiskers, a gray hair or so; but the admirable proportions of

his slight, but well-knit frame were in no degree impaired, and his spirits retained much of the brilliancy and buoyancy of early and sinless youth. Brenton, however, was less fortunate. He had grown stout. The animal passions to which he had so long given unbounded sway, were not without leaving their traces on his once handsome countenance; and, while he concealed, under a very natural wig, the loss of his hair, he found it expedient—not having faith in Batchelor or Brunel—to cut off the whiskers of which he had once been vain, and cultivate instead a moustache and imperial, as less likely to betray the advance of age. But these changes were not great, when we consider the time that had elapsed, and the lives that two, at least, of the parties must have led.

Mrs. Ketchum had long been importunate with her son to marry. Not that she wished to see another in possession of the authority which she had used so despotically; but simply to preserve in her own family the estate which, should Edward die without issue, must revert to the relations of her late father-in-law, whose memory she now hated as heartily as she had once professed to love his person. But, though Edward Ketchum had been a worshipper at many shrines, he had yielded up his heart to none. His boyish attachment to Sophy Ingraham excepted, he had never known what it was really to love, and had always professed a perfect horror of matrimony—the death, as he called it, of man's true liberty—and would often exclaim, in the words of the redoubtable Tom Thumb,

“Although I love the gentle Huncamunca,
Yet at the thought of marriage I grow pale!”

for his own observations, and the experience of his friend Brenton, had forced the conviction upon him, that the marriage state was any thing but a happy one.

Continual droppings, however, will wear out a stone; and the reiteration of the same wish for seventeen years, and more, on the part of his worthy parent, could not fail at last of the desired effect; and he finally consented to marry, if his mother would condescend to point out to him among the young ladies of her acquaintance, any one whom she might consider worthy to succeed her. This she readily undertook; and named to him, at once, a near relation of her own. The lady was altogether unexceptionable as far as face, figure, family, and fashion were concerned, and Edward was fain to submit to the destiny he had provoked. After a very short courtship he proposed; and—to his deep chagrin—was accepted! This misfortune, I have no hesitation in saying, could not have happened had Brenton been at hand to prevent it. But, unhappily, he was then absent; having gone to Washington to procure a situation in the Customs for a bankrupt friend—who, failing to manage his own affairs, felt himself fully competent to take charge of those of the public—and when he returned, the evil was consummated. Edward Ketchum was a doomed man! Brenton shrugged his shoulders, and uttered a witticism or two;

but was too politic to say any thing that could be remembered to his disadvantage at a future day, for Ketchum was too useful a friend to be lightly lost; and from that time, until the night but one preceding the wedding morn,

“All went merry as a marriage bell.”

The father of Edward Ketchum had been a man of expensive tastes, and left at his demise, among other things of value, a great quantity of plate. This, however, was allowed to lie undisturbed in a vault of one of the Wall street banks, except on extraordinary occasions, when Mrs. Ketchum would bring it out, and endeavor to astonish her friends by a display of her wealth at a *dejeuner a-la-fourchette*, or dinner party. To do honor to an event fraught with so much consequence to the world—meaning herself—as the marriage of the heir of Ketchum Purchase, and determined that the wedding breakfast should be remembered for years to come, as the most magnificent thing of the kind ever witnessed in the ostentatious city of Gotham, the old lady had all the gold and silver plate of the family brought home and placed for safe keeping in an iron chest, which stood in a small room, or closet, that could be entered only by passing through Edward's sleeping room, in which were also deposited the jewels intended for the bridal gift, consisting of rings, bracelets, and a necklace to which was appended a cross

“That jews might kiss and infidels adore,”

and the key of this closet was never entrusted to any hand but her own.

It was now night—the night but one before the morning appointed for the wedding; and, as the day had been one of unusual toil and bustle, the weariness of the servants was evident, when, at a later hour than common, they were summoned to prayers. Even the active spirit of Mrs. Ketchum seemed to flag; and she asked—which, however, was no rare circumstance—Joel Roberts, her son's man, to read the chapter she had chosen for that evening's instruction, which he did, as Polonius says—"with good accent and good discretion." They then retired; and, in an hour after, the whole house was given up to silence and darkness, except the hall, where a night lamp was kept for Ketchum, who, having gone out as usual, with his friend Brenton, could not be expected home until a late hour.

Roberts had been directed never to sit up for his master; and now retired at the same time with the other servants. But, if he retired, it was not to sleep; for when he found everything quiet, he left his room, and, without a light, and with his boots in his hand, descended the stairs with a noiseless step. He unbarred the back door and went out, and proceeding to the foot of the garden, opened a door in the wall, and entered an alley, where he pulled on his boots. The night was "dark as Erebus;" but the worthy Joel had trodden that path too often to find any difficulty in making his way, and walked on, without hesitation, until he found himself in the great thoroughfare of the city.

With rapid steps he now pursued his course for a considerable distance, when he suddenly turned down a narrow and badly lighted street, in the middle of which he kept, for the condition of the sidewalks was such as to render them unsafe even to the noon-day pedestrian, until he came to a house, at the windows of which were seen those red curtains, which proclaim to all that the devil's auction is held within, and that souls are nightly offered there for sale. This he entered; although it might be supposed that the mingled sounds of lewdness and blasphemy, which met him at the threshold, would have been too much for one of his extreme moral sensibility to encounter.



XII.

WHILE VIRTUE CREEPS VICE GALLOPS. THE MALLISONS.

THE house which Roberts had entered, was, from the sign above the door, known throughout the region in which it was situated by the name of "The Lion's Den," or more generally, THE DEN, a noted rendezvous of rogues and villains, of almost every grade, and well understood to be such by the Police of that day, who, nevertheless, did not make the slightest attempt to break it up. This was kept by no less a personage than our old acquaintance, George Mallison,

who, with the money for which he had alienated his right, whatever that might have been, in poor little Jeff, had established himself in business, on a small scale, as a vender of distilled destruction, but which he had expanded, as his means increased, until he stood at the very head of his class—the sordid slayers of the bodies and souls of their fellow-men.

The seventeen years that were past had added greatly to the burly form of George, and strengthened the bull-dog expression of his surly countenance, and the consciousness of power—the power which wealth, no matter how acquired, seldom fails to give—now rendered him as overbearing to all around him as he had formerly been to poor Sophy. His power was absolute; his word law to all within the sphere of his influence, and he was a bold fellow, indeed, and one who recked little of a whole skin, who would dispute a point with Mallison within the boundaries of the Den. He was now seated at a table in one corner of the crowded bar-room with a young man, rather fashionably dressed, whose very handsome countenance was sadly disfigured by the air of unscrupulous villainy by which it was characterized. He was apparently not more than one, or two, and twenty, although the slightness of his figure, the extreme delicacy of his features, and the soft brown curls which fell from under the cap of fine blue cloth that was set jauntily on the side of his head, might have made him appear much younger than he really was. This was Washington—or as he was familiarly called, Wash Mallison—the heir apparent of the Lion's Den.

The original disposition of this young man was certainly good, and, with proper care, he would, in all probability, have grown up a highly useful member of society, for his talents, though not great, were much above mediocrity. But it seemed the determination of Mallison to root out every virtuous principle which nature had planted within him, and to train him up to pursue, without hesitation, the path of evil that he had marked out for him. Unfortunately, he succeeded but too well. From a shy, kind-hearted, honest-minded child, he grew up a daring, cruel, dishonest youth, and few of a certain class of young men were better known throughout the city than Wash Mallison.

And here I would beg a moment's pause, to say a word on the folly of the times, in giving to our children the names of the great ones of our country. It is worse than ludicrous—it is an insult to the memory of the illustrious dead—the Washingtons, Adamses, Jeffersons, Hamiltons, Jacksons, and all that glorious brotherhood of heroes and sages, that have conferred such high honor upon the American name in the brief period of our national existence—that their names should be thrown away upon the miserable creatures who crawl through our streets, or the wretches who crowd our prisons, just as those of the great men of antiquity are given to our dogs. Nor is it an advantage to the individuals so named. A fine coat on a common beggar strikes us by its incongruity, and renders more apparent the raggedness of the rest of his attire, and the man who has done nothing to make

a name for himself, often becomes ridiculous by the contradiction apparent between his name and his deeds; for, as it was once said by a friend of mine, to one of this class, who had the folly to boast of this distinction—having nothing else in the world to boast of—

“We often hear men, who have no better claim
To notice, make boast of a time-honored name;
But prate of that honor as much as you please, sir,
A dog’s but a dog—though his name should be Cæsar.”

But this is a digression.

Both father and son rose on the appearance of Roberts, and, without speaking, the trio walked into another room, where a number of people, some well and some ill-dressed, were seated at different tables, enjoying themselves over their drink, for before each stood a glass or a mug containing his favorite beverage. Various subjects were under discussion at the same moment, filling the place with a clamor little short of that of Babel. One young fellow, in a short drab overcoat and flash waistcoat, over which was paraded a quantity of gilt chain, was relating with great gusto, and a proper intermixture of slang phrases and horrid blasphemies, the particulars of a desperate fight in which he had lately been engaged, to a sleek-headed youth in a greasy roundabout, whose weasel eyes seemed to glow with pleasure at the recital. Two ragged politicians were loud in argument upon the comparative merits of their respective parties, and, to take the words of the disputants, both were proven to be equally infamous, and unworthy the support of

any honest man. A hanger on at one of the theatres, where the finest creations of human genius were nightly burlesqued, for the amusement of a coarse-minded audience, was trying to entertain some half a dozen listeners, from whom he expected a drink in return, by a parody of a song then very much in vogue; and near the singer sat four or five half drunken controversialists, who were listening, open-mouthed, to a carbuncle-nosed Jew pedlar, known by the *soubriquet* of the "Professor," who was endeavoring to prove, from the Revelations of St. John! the speedy downfall of the Papal Usurpation.

Without stopping to speak to any one of the motley group that composed the company in "The Reading Room," as this was called, Mallison, Wash, and Roberts ascended a flight of stairs at the end of it, which led to a covered gallery that, crossing a paved court, connected the Den with the private dwelling of Mallison, which fronted on another street. At the termination of this gallery was a door that opened into the upper entry of Mallison's house; and descending a flight of broad and well-carpeted stairs, they passed through a wide hall, handsomely furnished and lighted, and entered a parlor, which bore more marks of wealth than of taste, through which a pleasant light was diffused by a large solar lamp, that stood on a centre table of beautiful black marble in the middle of the room.

As soon as they had entered, Mallison locked the door behind them, as he did also the folding-doors that opened into the front parlor; then, drawing chairs

to the table, they seated themselves; when looking earnestly in the face of Roberts, the master of the Den uttered the monosyllable,

“Well?”

“All right!” was the answer, in a cheerful tone. “The coast is clear. He’s out, and will be till two or three, at the earliest. Before that time we can have every thing taken care of. Let Lewsen and Sweet come up with Wash to the mouth of the alley, but no farther; for fear of some blunder. They know nothing of the premises, and he does.”

“That I do,” said the young man, “like a book.”

“Well, come up in ’bout an hour. You will find the back way open. Here are two keys, that will turn in their well-oiled locks with as little difficulty as a politician will turn his coat. Mind, this crooked one is for the first door. Here is a third for the iron chest. I’ve had precious hard work to get at that long enough for my purpose. Whenever he was out of the way, the old woman was sure to be in it; and ’twas not till five this morning that, finding him in a sound sleep, I stole in and took the impression. By the light in the hall, you will know if he is still absent.”

“But if he should return after Wash gets in?” asked Mallison.

“No fear of that. Brenton will try to make all he can out of him to-night, knowing he is not likely to have another chance for some time, as he goes with his bride to Washington immediately after the ceremony. They have scarce left the theatre yet; and after they come out, they must have some supper;

then look in at ——'s, and then for *ecarté* till two or three at least. But if he should return, Wash is not so large that he could not conceal himself behind the iron chest in the closet, which he will hardly enter to-night, or in one of the windows of the outer room, the curtains of which very conveniently come down to the floor. The greatest danger is from the old woman. She is forever spooking about, when she should be asleep; and, for that reason, I must not be long out, for fear she should call me for some nonsense or other, as she often does. She, however, gives timely notice of her approach, for the creaking of her shoes can be heard from garret to cellar. You can easily keep out of her way."

"Yes," said Wash, with an oath, "and out of his'n, too; or, at any rate, I can easily put him out of mine," drawing from a breast pocket, and holding up, with a significant gesture, a spring dirk; and as the sharp blade gleamed in the light of the lamp, the heavy features of the elder Mallison were animated with a fiendish joy.

"No blood, Wash, no blood!" said Roberts, with a shudder, and turning deadly pale. "The plate and jewels are worth some risk, but not worth that."

"You'm a precious coward, you am, Joe," said Wash, with a laugh, as he returned the dirk to its place. "But don't be afeared. If we can bleed him quietly one way, we won't try t'other."

"You understand perfectly what you are to do?" asked Roberts of Wash.

"I rather think I do," was the answer.

"Then I'll take myself off," and he rose to depart.

"Won't you try suthing before you go?" asked Mallison.

"No, thank you; not to-night. When this is over, I'll drink with you till all is blue; but for the present I must keep a clear head. Good night." The door was unlocked, and he and Mallison retired, leaving Wash behind; who remained for the purpose of making some alterations in his dress, for which he ascended to his own room in the garret, and when he returned to the parlor was equipped in a rough pea-jacket and tarpaulin hat, instead of the jockey coat and handsome cap he had worn.

At the moment he returned, his mother also entered the parlor. Time and circumstances had wrought great changes in Sophy. Her once slight figure had become greatly—even unpleasantly—expanded; her delicately-moulded features were now grown common, almost vulgar, and her complexion, which had partaken more of the lily than the rose, was greatly heightened by the habitual and immoderate use of distilled liquors. I have already said that the intellect of Sophy was weak; and the little mind with which she was endowed, had received little or no cultivation. But the goodness of her heart would have made ample amends for the weakness of her head, had its warm and generous affections been cherished or appreciated. But, unhappily, they were neither. She had been undervalued by all with whom she had ever been associated, with the single exception of her mother-in-law, who certainly both loved and prized

her, and continued, until her death, her never-failing friend—the only one who dared to stand between her and the brutality of her husband. Even the one child left to her, and on which she doated, ceased, as he grew up, to return the affection she had lavished upon him, and now treated her with marked contempt. He had, with the clear-sightedness of childhood, early discovered the mental inferiority of his parent, and, never having been taught to “honor father and mother,” took no pains to conceal the opinion he entertained of her. The unkindness of Mrs. Ketchum and the treachery of Edward; the brutality of George Mallison and the buffetings of fortune, poor Sophy had borne, if not from Christian motives, at least, with a patience that would have done honor to the Christian name. But the neglect of her son struck deep into her heart: and finding no sympathy from the world without, and having no resources within herself, she sought a temporary relief from the depressing sense of her isolated condition, by a recourse to unnatural stimulants, until the use of them became, as she thought, necessary to her very existence; and in a few years after her husband had established himself at the Den, the once lovely, gentle, patient Sophy Mallison sank into that most disgusting of human creatures—a FEMALE DRUNKARD.

She entered the parlor just as Wash returned to it, after having equipped himself for his night's adventure. She had been invited to a party at the house of a wholesale liquor dealer, of whom her husband had long been an excellent customer, and was now,

at almost eleven o'clock, prepared to go out. Her dress formed a striking contrast to the garb of poverty in which we last saw her, and consisted of a costly satin, richly embroidered, and trimmed with a demi-cape of real Valenciennes; around her neck she wore a valuable Milan chain, that extended almost half way down her dress, to which was attached a beautiful little watch, that was held in, but not concealed by, a pocket at her left side. Three bracelets glittered on her left and two on her right arm. Her hands were gloved, but over her gloves she wore a number of showy and costly rings; and on her head was a graceful toque of crimson velvet and silver lace, from under which fell a few curls of glossy brown—purchased for the occasion.

"Surely, Wash," said she, in a querulous tone, "you are not going in that trim?"

"Who said I was?" he answered carelessly.

"Well, if you're not, 'tis time you were getting ready. The carriage must certainly be waiting. 'Twas ordered at ten."

"Perhaps it is. You'd better ask. I'm not agoin."

"Not going? You said at tea you would."

"I've changed my mind since. Perhaps I'll call for you, and perhaps I won't. At any rate, I'm not goin for to go with you now; so you'd better trundle off by yourself."

"There's mischief afoot, I'll be bound," said his mother, with considerable asperity. Then added, with a sigh, "O for the days of poverty and toil, and even of beggary! for then the morsel we got—poor as it

was—was sweet, for it was honestly come by. Washington, my son, think of the end of the evil doer; and try betimes to mend your ways. If you do not, the State Prison, or——”

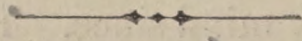
“O, hush up!” exclaimed the youth, impatiently, while a frightful scowl passed over his handsome features. “If ever I’m hanged, who may I thank for it? Who made me what I am?”

“Not I, Wash, not I.”

“Well, if you didn’t do it yourself, you looked on while it was done, without trying to prevent it.”

“Ah, you little know how much I tried, and what I suffered for trying. But ’twas of no use!”

“Well, if ’twas no use then, ’tis no use now. So,” he added, with an attempt at cheerfulness, “let’s talk no more about it. Take a good stiff horn to settle your narves, and then go to the party by yourself. If I can, I’ll call for you. But if I a’n’t there when the carriage comes, don’t wait.” So saying, he left the room, and his mother proceeded to follow his directions to the very letter.



XIII.

WHEN ROBBERY LEADS MURDER FOLLOWS. A PAINFUL DISCOVERY.

IN passing through the reading room of the Den, Wash stopped at a table where two men were engaged

at a game of dominoes, and, after saying a word to them in a whisper, they rose and followed him. These were Lewsen and Sweet. The former, a stout athletic fellow, standing six feet in his stockings, and the latter almost a dwarf in size, but full-chested and broad-shouldered, with long arms and bow legs, and evidently built more for strength than show. Thorough villains, both, as ever escaped the hangman's noose. When they reached the outer room, Wash took them up to the bar, and filling for each a good "stiff horn," they drank it off, and then left the house together.

Having placed his confederates at the mouth of the alley, where they were enjoined to remain until his return, Wash entered the garden by the door in the wall, and proceeded deliberately, but with a noiseless step, to the back door, which he pushed open gently, and beheld the lamp still burning in the hall. By this he knew Ketchum was still absent. He then ascended the stairs, found, without the slightest difficulty, the door he sought, unlocked it, and entered the room—taking the precaution to relock it, and remove the key, as soon as he had made his entrance good. By the light cast from the grate he was directed to the closet which contained the treasure. This he opened, and, when he found himself fairly within, relocked it as he had done the other, and taking from under his peajacket a small dark lantern, lighted it, and proceeded to business.

Scarce had he taken a peep into the iron chest when he was startled by the opening of a door below. He listened, and heard the firm tread of a man in the

hall. Footsteps then ascended the stairs, a key turned in the lock of the outer door, and some one entered the room. Wash extinguished his light, and applying his eye to the keyhole, saw that the intruder was no other than Ketchum himself, and, as there was no way of egress but through that room, he very philosophically made up his mind to remain quietly where he was. So coiling himself into a corner above the chest, he resolved to wait with patience until the coast should become clear—either by the withdrawal of Ketchum, or of his resigning himself to the power of sleep.

But he seemed determined to adopt neither of these courses. Brenton had met with certain friends who were not exactly to the taste of his companion, and Ketchum had, in consequence, returned home at the unusually early hour of half past eleven. But to sleep before twelve he had not attempted for years, and he did not think it worth while to make the trial now. So, after taking off boots, coat, and vest, and putting himself into gown and slippers, he sat down to read. But, though his eyes ran over the pages of the half dozen books which he took up one after another, they conveyed no meaning to his mind, and he threw them down at last, with a feeling of weariness.

He then arose, and walked two or three times across the room, when his eye happening to fall upon his escritoire, he stopped and opened it, and taking thence a number of billets, and glancing carelessly over their contents, threw them into the grate. At length he drew forth a paper, on which appeared some lines

written in a large, but unformed hand, with ink that was now become of a pale brown, and with a shade of melancholy upon his still handsome countenance, read them aloud.

"Poor Sophy!" sighed Ketchum, as he committed this memento of an early passion to the flames, "had I always been as honest towards thee as when I wrote those verses, thy fate and mine would have worn a different complexion from what they do at present! But," he added, with a wish to remove from himself the responsibility of an act which he had not scrupled to commit, "who can control his fate?"

Soon after this he retired to bed, and in a little while, his deep breathing gave audible assurance to Wash in his hiding-place that he slept, and not until then did the young ruffian attempt to change the position he had at first taken.

He now arose; and, having filled his capacious pockets with as much of the valuables as they could hold—including, of course, the bridal present—let himself quietly out. His step was noiseless as a cat's, and he had nearly reached the door of the outer room, without in the least disturbing the sleeper, when his foot struck against a boot-jack, that had been left carelessly on the floor. The noise was trifling. But trifling as it was, it awoke Ketchum, who, starting up in his bed, hastily demanded,

"Who's there?"

The room was dark; and Wash knew, by remaining perfectly still, he would run very little risk of detection. But a coal, at that moment falling from

the grate, threw a gleam athwart the apartment, and revealed the figure of the robber to the startled gaze of Ketchum, who immediately sprang from the bed and seized him by the collar. The youth tried to shake him off. But finding this impossible, for he was held in the grasp of a strong man, and knowing there was no time to be lost, for their scuffle must very soon alarm the house, he drew the dirk from his sleeve, and struck Ketchum deep in the left side. The wounded man staggered back, and uttered a cry of pain; and this cry was echoed by some one in the room adjoining.

Mrs. Ketchum, with the sleeplessness of age, had arisen from her bed after a cat-nap, as was her wont, and was preparing to take her nightly walk through the house, when she was alarmed by the noise in her son's room, which was on the same floor with her's, and after a short interjunctory scream, hurried to his door. She knocked and called; but received no answer, although she distinctly heard the trampling of feet within, for the hand of Wash grasped so tightly the throat of Ketchum that he was unable to utter a word.

Hereupon the terror of the old lady became truly pitiable; and she uttered a scream that rang through the silent chambers of the house, and brought the servants in their night-clothes, almost instantly from their beds. But instead of suggesting any means of opening the door, they only increased the distress of their mistress, by running backwards and forwards, and crying at the tops of their voices, "Watch!"

"Fire!" "Murder!" until they attracted the attention of the few passers-by at that late hour, some of whom now beat at the door below, and inquired the cause of the tumult.

By this time, Roberts had been drawn from his room, yawning, as if just awakened from a sound sleep, and after questioning one and then another as to the cause of all this uproar, seemed at last to obtain an inkling of the truth, and suggested the propriety of breaking in the door, a suggestion that was warmly seconded by some of the strangers who had come in from the street. This was done; and before light was admitted, except what came from the night lamp of Mrs. Ketchum, Roberts managed to get near enough to Wash to whisper him to endeavor, in the confusion, to make his escape. Advice more easy to give than to take.

At the time when the crowd in front of the house was densest, a carriage, which had been drawn rapidly along, was stopped, and a lady, putting her head out of the window, desired to know what was the matter.

"Why, ma'am," answered a young man standing near the carriage, "no one exactly knows; but it seems there's murder going on inside. We'll know now, I guess," he added, as the door was opened, and the crowd rushed into the hall.

The lady in the carriage was no other than Sophy, now returning from the liquor merchant's party; and her curiosity was strongly excited to know what was going on within. But she hesitated about gratifying it. Twenty-six years before she had been turned out

of that very house ; and the recollection of the opprobrious names that day cast upon her, even at this distance of time, filled her breast with the bitterest indignation. But a stronger feeling than curiosity prompted her to leave the carriage and ascend the steps. She had gathered enough from those who crowded the hall, to know that a robbery had been attempted, and a murder probably committed ; and a terrible foreboding took possession of her heart. She had long suspected—although she knew nothing positive on the subject—that her son was often engaged in enterprises that would ill bear the light, and for one of these, she very much feared, he was preparing when he left her in the parlor ; a suspicion that was greatly strengthened by recollecting to have caught a glimpse of Roberts, as he and her husband were returning through the hall, with whose character she was well acquainted, and whom she knew to be the servant of Edward Ketchum. She alighted, and made her way up stairs. The room was quite full ; but, in the first object she distinctly beheld, her worst fears were realized. This was Wash ; who was standing between two strong men, by whom he was firmly held.

“What is all this ?” she demanded, eagerly approaching her son.

“Can’t you see ?” returned he, gloomily.

The question was unnecessary. Poor Sophy had seen enough. The whole terrible truth had been revealed to her by a glance. In a large easy-chair, supported by pillows, sat Edward Ketchum—pale as

death, and his shirt stiff with blood;—and her son was in custody! She had nothing to learn; and, with a wild scream, exclaiming, “Wretched boy, you have murdered your father!” fell into violent hysterics, from which she did not recover until she was placed in the carriage to be conveyed home.

XIV.

AN EPISODE.

I MUST now diverge for a short time, from the direct path of this narrative, to relate that, while preparations were going on for the espousals of Edward Ketchum and his fair cousin, another wedding was on the *tapis*. From the time of her settlement in the temporary home which she had found in Montreal, Mrs. Rollins had kept up a constant, although not very frequent intercourse by letters with our young friend Alfred, which kept him advised of the health and unchanged affection of his Kate, while she was duly apprized of the success that had attended his agricultural plans, as well as the inquiries which he had diligently followed up, concerning the faith that she so undoubtingly professed. At length a letter reached him—accompanied by a manuscript of several sheets—containing the long-desired permission to come and claim the hand which he had sought, not

only to possess but to deserve. That he availed himself of this permission, no one, of course, will doubt, and while he is on his way to Canada, we will take a peep into the packet which contained the story of Mrs. Rollins, and ran as follows:

“The trials with which it has pleased my heavenly Father, for his own wise purposes, to visit me, beset my path at a very early age. My parents had made what is called a love match, or, in other words, a romantic and most imprudent marriage, and thereby disobliged their friends, who, in their displeasure, utterly cast them off, and left them to struggle, as best they could, for a bare subsistence, which they obtained by keeping a plain school in a remote part of their native State. In this obscure spot I first saw the light, and here, too, my parents died soon after my birth, leaving me to the care of a neighboring farmer, a person in whom—although their acquaintance was of recent date—my father had reposed implicit confidence. This confidence was not misplaced, and never was child treated with greater tenderness by a parent than I was treated by the excellent Mr. Garwood. But, unhappily, this good man died before I had passed the twelfth year of my age, and the charge of me devolved, as a matter of course, upon his widow, the only person who at that time seemed to regard me with dislike.

“After this, my stay with Mrs. Garwood was a time of extreme hardship, for though a delicate girl, I was obliged not only to perform my part in the domestic affairs of the family, but to card, spin, and weave;

milk, churn, and make cheese; weed the garden, the flax, and the wheat; plant, hoe, and husk corn; pull flax, and pick potatoes, and many other things of like nature, entirely unsuited to my age and sex. One privilege only did I enjoy. This was to cultivate a small piece of ground for my own especial use, the produce of which brought me in a trifling sum annually, that by careful hoarding amounted in time to several dollars.

“One Sunday in October—it was my fifteenth birthday—I wandered, as was my custom, whenever I could command the time, far into the woods. It was truly an autumnal day. The sun shone but now and then through the masses of gray clouds that were drifting across the face of heaven, and the wind, that sobbed among the mighty branches of the giant trees, almost covered me with falling leaves, whose bright tints filled the contemplative mind with melancholy—for their beauty spake of decay. I had brought with me a book, but did not attempt to read. In hours of severest trial, my spirits had never seemed to flag. Indeed, I had always been regarded as a very happy, thoughtless creature, and no one could have supposed that my gayety was all assumed, to hide the throbbings of an aching heart. But I was now alone in the woods, as I had long been alone in the world, and thought I might for once give way to the sadness that was weighing so heavily upon me.

“So I sat me down on the trunk of a fallen tree, and leaned my head upon my hands. Tears then

began to flow, and they flowed unchecked, as they had come unbidden, for they eased my heart of an almost insupportable burthen. And there I sat, I know not how long, but when I arose to return to the house, I encountered the gaze of a stranger riveted upon me.

"I started; when, seeing my confusion, he said mildly,

"Be not alarmed. I do not wish to annoy you. I am a stranger, and have no right to your confidence. But, seeing you weep, I was constrained to stop, and learn, if I might, the cause of your unhappiness."

"Indeed, sir," I answered, "I hardly know it myself. I fear I am very foolish, for I have hardly any cause for sorrow."

"Then you do very wrong to weep over imaginary ills. While blessed with youth, innocence, and parental care, no one can, or should be unhappy."

"Parental care, sir, I have never known."

"Poor child! Still you have friends?"

"Yes, sir, the daughters of Mrs. Garwood, whom I have lived with from my infancy, have always been my friends; but I am no favorite with their mother."

"Well, my dear, though you may not possess, you can, at least, deserve the favor of Mrs. Garwood. But for this, do not depend upon your own unaided efforts. Ask assistance of God, and He will not withhold it. Remember my advice, my child, and farewell." So saying, he abruptly departed.

XV.

THE EPISODE CONTINUED.

“THE unkindness of Mrs. Garwood increased with years; and at length became insupportable. I then determined, as I had reached the age when, according to law, I was become my own mistress, to seek a new home;—a determination that was confirmed by a letter which I found among some papers that had belonged to my parents. This was from a sister of my poor mother, urging her warmly and affectionately to return to her friends. It was dated at New York, and signed *Susan Bradley*.

“If willing to receive the mother, she surely would not reject the daughter; and a gleam of joy irradiated the gloom which had long hung upon my spirits, when I thought of the possibility of meeting face to face one upon whose tenderness I felt I had some claim. I now mentioned to Mrs. Garwood the resolution I had formed; and, contrary to my expectation, although she certainly looked surprised, she expressed no displeasure. Indeed I think she was rather glad to get rid of me, although I never could conceive why it was that she regarded me with such unconcealed dislike.

“I packed up my worldly all in a common blue and white handkerchief, and, after taking an affec-

tionate leave of Becky and Mimy, who had always been to me as sisters, I set out on foot for Troy, a distance of several miles. Here I took passage on board of a sloop; and in a few days found myself, an utter stranger, in the metropolis of the western world.

“When about to leave the vessel, the captain asked very kindly to what part of the city I was going, to which I answered that I really did not know.

“‘Don’t know?’ said he. ‘But surely you know the street you’re going to?’

“‘Indeed, sir, I do not.’

“‘Well, as ’tis late now, you’d better stay aboard to-night. Or, if you don’t like that, I’ll take you to my sister-in-law, a very nice woman, who’ll give you a bed, and to-morrow you’ll have the hull day to look for your aunt.’

“This was real kindness on the part of the worthy captain; and his offer, to take me to his sister-in-law’s, was accepted with equal readiness and gratitude.

“My reception from this good woman was truly cheering, and I felt myself quite at home with her. There was something very motherly in her attentions; and the order and cleanliness of her small apartments, reminded me at once of my late home; for with all her faults, Mrs. Garwood was a notable housekeeper; and, notwithstanding the strangeness of my situation, I never slept more soundly than that first night in New York.

“The next morning I rose long before any of the

family was stirring, and dressed myself with the utmost care; then, as soon as I had taken my breakfast, set out to seek my aunt. But, although I must have called at the house of every Bradley in the city, I could not find her; I sought and foot-sore and heart-sick, I returned at night to the shelter of Mrs. Ford's roof.

“‘Now, don't be cast down,’ said my kind-hearted hostess, when I told her of my ill-success. ‘You'll find your aunt in a day or two, I dare say; and you're very welcome to stay here till then, or as long as you please. If you shouldn't find her, and are anxious to get something to do to take care of yourself, I'll take you, whenever you've a mind, to an Intelligence Office, where you can get any kind of place you want for a few shillings.’

“I remained several days with Mrs. Ford, every one of which, except Sunday, I spent in searching for my aunt; but in vain. I then proposed to Mrs. Ford to seek a place at an Intelligence Office, whither she very kindly consented to accompany me.

“We entered the office by a descent of three or four steps; and within a little pen, at a desk, stood a small, withered, middle-aged man in green spectacles, who received us with a smirk, and then called, in an authoritative tone, to a young man who had been very rudely staring at me, to fall back, and let the ladies approach.

“‘Well, ladies,’ he then said, rubbing together his shrivelled hands, ‘what can I do for you this morning?’

“‘This young person,’ answered Mrs. Ford, ‘is in want of a situation in some plain family.’

“‘The young lady can be well recommended, I presume,’ he said, as he took the fee, and set my name down in his book. ‘You know, people now-a-days are very particular.’

“‘She’s a stranger in the city, sir, and has never been at service.’

“‘Pray, miss,’ he demanded of me, ‘what kind of situation would you like.’

“‘Any kind,’ I answered with much difficulty, for I felt my situation to be an extremely painful one, to be obliged, perhaps,

“‘To beg some fellow worm
To give me leave to toil,’

‘any kind that would not be too much for my strength.’

“‘Well, then, I think I can just suit you. A lady was here, about half an hour ago, who is anxious to get a girl from the country. A very respectable lady, indeed, and wants one more for a companion than any thing else. Here is a ticket. If the place shouldn’t suit you, return it to me, and I’ll give you another.’

“The house to which I was sent was a very handsome one, but in rather an obscure street, and the mistress of it one of the most beautiful women I had ever seen. Her husband, she told me, was master of a vessel, and then at sea, and as her family consisted only of herself, and, as she kept no other servant—a

black woman coming daily to do the heaviest of her work—she would not be able to spare me to go out often. But confinement, to one who had scarce an acquaintance in the city, was no hardship, and I agreed with her at once, and entered on the duties of my place that very evening.

“I had been nearly a month with Mrs. Vallee, when standing at the door one afternoon, during the absence of that lady, a gentleman who was passing, suddenly stopped, and looking at me—rather rudely, I thought—asked if I had ever seen him before.

“I looked at him for a moment, and, notwithstanding the distance of time, recognized in him the stranger who had accosted me in the woods at ——, and told him so.

“‘Then I am not mistaken,’ said he. ‘Why,’ he then asked in a sharp tone, ‘did you leave ——?’

“‘Because, sir,’ I answered, ‘I could no longer stay there. Besides the unkindness of Mrs. Garwood, I had to work beyond my strength.’

“‘And so you thought to come here and live without work?’

“‘Indeed, sir,’ I replied, a good deal hurt by his manner, ‘I thought no such thing. I came to seek my aunt.’

“‘Is the woman of this house your aunt?’

“‘No, sir. I could not find my aunt, and was obliged to take a service place.’

“‘But do you know whom you are living with?’

“‘O yes, sir,’ I answered readily, ‘her name is Mrs. Vallee.’

“‘This Mrs. Vallee, as you call her,’ he said, ‘is one of the most infamous women in the city. But what is the name of your aunt? Perhaps I can assist you in finding her;—at any rate, here you must not stay.’

“‘Her name is Bradley—Mrs. Susan Bradley.’

“‘And yours?’ he asked eagerly.

“‘Is Susan Rollins.’

“‘The daughter of William Rollins and Harriet Ashby?’

“‘Yes, sir,’ I answered almost breathless.

“‘Gracious Heaven!’ he exclaimed, ‘I thank thee. This will be joyful news for your poor aunt.’

“‘O, you know her, then?’

“‘Right well. But let us leave this wretched place. Take what belongs to you, and come with me at once.’

“‘But Mrs. Vallee——’

“‘Think not of her. Do as I desire, and delay not.’ I did not wait to be urged again.

“It was now almost dark, and, after walking pretty smartly for ten or fifteen minutes, we stopped at a neat two-story house, which my conductor entered without either knocking or ringing. He then led me into a parlor, at a window of which, although there was no light in the room, I could see a lady was seated, whom, having motioned me to a chair, he approached, and began some trifling conversation. At length he said:

“‘You seem low-spirited to-night, aunt. Why are you so sad?’

“‘I have been thinking of the dead!’ she answered.

“‘But why will you think always of the dead?’

“‘Because I have none living to think of, Henry, but you.’

“‘But may not Harriet have left a child?’

“‘It is hardly possible. That she had one, I have reason to think, from the intimations in poor William’s letter previous to their leaving Albany. But if they are dead—of which there can be little doubt—it must have died too, for all my inquiries respecting it and them have brought me nothing but disappointment.’

“‘What would you say, if I should produce that child?’

“‘Do not jest with me, Henry,’ she said in a tone of melancholy that brought tears to my eyes. ‘I feel just now that I could not well bear it.’

“‘Pardon me, dear aunt,’ he said tenderly, ‘I did not mean to give you pain.’ Lights were just then brought in, and, taking me by the hand, and leading me up to her, he asked,

“‘Does this face remind you of any you have ever seen?’

“The old lady pushed back my bonnet, and after looking earnestly at me for some minutes through her spectacles, answered in a voice tremulous with emotion, ‘It is the face of my sister!’ and, throwing her arms around me, and laying her head on my neck, wept long and silently.

XVI.

THE EPISODE CONTINUED.

“MY aunt was now quite old—having seen no fewer, probably, than three score years and ten. She had been many years the senior of my mother, whom, on the death of their parents, she had taken into her family, and brought up more as a daughter than a sister. The husband of my aunt was the uncle of Henry Morville; and as Henry and my mother were nearly of an age, it had been confidently hoped by their elders that an attachment might spring up between them, that would make their temporary residence under the same roof a permanent one. This hope, had its fulfilment depended upon Morville, would have met with a speedy realization, for his love for my mother was of quick and vigorous growth. But his affection was not returned. One whom he had introduced to the acquaintance of his future wife—one young, inexperienced, and of ardent temperament—had taken advantage of the easy confidence of his friend, clandestinely wooed, and, I need hardly add, won for himself the heart of the beautiful but giddy Harriet Ashby.

“The treachery of him in whom he had trusted stung poor Morville to the quick. But he uttered not one word of reproach. Not so was it, however, with my aunt. She felt she had a right to be indignant,

and did not restrain the expression of her just anger. Bitter words were uttered by both parties; and a serious rupture followed, which, unfortunately, was never truly healed, although a few letters passed between my aunt and my parents just before my birth, in which the former urged her sister and her husband to come to her—but, as we have seen, in vain.

“After the death of her husband, who was a merchant of some standing, my aunt had given up his business entirely to Morville, whose name was also placed in the Directory as master of her house, which was the reason I failed in my search for her upon first coming to the city. Morville never married. But disappointment had not made him a misanthrope, and, although there was a *brusquerie* in his manner that was not at all times pleasing, the goodness of his heart was manifested in every action of his life; and wherever the name of Morville was uttered, a blessing accompanied it.

“Some years before this my aunt had taken a poor girl to assist in the light work of the family, but whom she subsequently adopted and educated as a daughter. Emmeline was very beautiful certainly, but very vain, and of a most ungovernable temper; with art enough, however, to conceal these defects of character, and with accomplishments that could not fail to command the admiration of all who knew her. We were naturally thrown very much together, and I was disposed to love her with all my heart. But, although she generally appeared kind to me—sometimes even too kind,—and ready to excuse my many defects, by at-

tributing all to the neglect from which I had suffered in early life, I never could bring myself to feel towards her as I wished. There was a want of sincerity in her manner that made me rather fear than love her from the first, and her treatment of me, in private, was marked with so much contempt as to keep me in a state of almost constant irritation, that severely tried a temper never, I fear, very good.

“My aunt had not seen much company for years; but, for the sake of her daughters, as she called Emmeline and me, now threw open her house to visitors of both sexes, and finally gave a party that surpassed any thing of the kind of which I had ever dreamed. The next morning Emmeline entered my room with a gay air; and addressing me in a voice that she intended to be very pleasant, but which had to me an extremely hollow sound, asked,

“‘Well, whom did you dream of after you went to bed? I think I can guess. Come, now, be honest. Was it not Brenton?’

“‘Brenton?’ I repeated, looking as unconscious as possible. ‘Who is Brenton?’

“‘O now, don’t try to play innocence. That blush, my pretty rustic, would betray, to dimmer eyes than mine, that you know who he is.’

“‘O yes, I think I do know whom you mean.’

“‘Nonsense, child, you know very well. No one who has seen him once can easily forget him. Compared to the puny tribe of dandies who surrounded us, he was

“In shape and gesture proudly eminent;”

and I every moment expected to hear you cry out with Miranda,

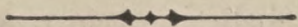
“I might call him
A thing divine, for nothing natural
I ever saw so noble;”

for, really, my dear, I never saw admiration so powerfully expressed. But he gave as good as you sent. His, however, was not confined to looks. I caught—without meaning to listen, I assure you—some of the pretty things he uttered; and of a verity they were very pretty.’

“Emmeline was right. Brenton had certainly distinguished me by his attentions; and the words he contrived to say to me, *sotto voce*, conveyed more pleasure to my heart than it had ever known before; a pleasure, I fear, that must have been easily read in my countenance, for it had been seen by Emmeline, and could hardly have escaped the keen eye of him who had excited it. It had been, as I soon learned, noticed also by another. This was Morville. The wretchedness depicted in his face, when we met at breakfast, made me apprehensive for his health. It was the mind, however, not the body, that was affected. The love he had once felt for the mother he had been disposed to transfer to the daughter, a disposition that had been encouraged, not to say prompted, by my aunt; and the gratification I had evidently derived from the attentions of Brenton had given him much pain, and this pain was now plainly marked in his ingenuous countenance.

“From this time the visits of Brenton were fre-

quent; and the pleasure I had first felt from his attentions increased, as those attentions assumed a deeper significance; and the sadness of Morville deepened in like proportion. All this evidently annoyed my aunt. But, with a heart full to repletion with gratified vanity, and a brain giddy with anticipations of coming bliss, I paid little heed to the evidences of the pain I was inflicting, and continued in the path I had chosen with unfaltering steps.



XVII.

THE EPISODE CONCLUDED.

“LATE one night, while sitting in my own little room, at a window which I had opened for the admission of the gentle breeze, and gazing abstractedly at the bright full moon, sailing majestically through the deep blue of the upper ocean, I was startled by a strain of music from a guitar, that arose from the street below, accompanied by a voice which gave utterance to words imbued with the very spirit of passion. The voice was Brenton’s; and the words of the song filled my heart with a gush of joy. But wishing not to appear to listen, I put forth my hand to close the casement, and in doing so, dropped from my fingers a knot of ribbon I had that evening worn in his presence in my hair; and looking after it by a sudden

impulse, saw Brenton stoop and pick it up, press it passionately to his lips, and place it in his bosom.

“The next morning my aunt sent for me to her room. In a grave, earnest, yet affectionate manner, she began to speak to me of the attentions of Brenton, which, she said, were displeasing to her for two reasons;—her wish to see me the wife of the truly excellent Henry Morville;—and the well-known character of Brenton—a spendthrift, a gambler, a sensualist—who, with his high notions of family, would never have stooped to become the suitor for the hand of her niece, did he not expect, with that hand, to receive the bulk of a fortune, which it had taken her husband long years of patient industry to amass;—an expectation that should never be realized. And concluded, by desiring me to give him his dismissal at once, or permit her to do so for me.

“I would consent to do neither. I assured her that, although I had every respect for the character of Morville, I never could feel for him the affection of a wife; and that, with all his faults, the charge of interestedness could not lie against Brenton, who well knew my poverty, and the little right I had to expect anything like a fortune. But, as he had not yet offered himself, I did not see how I could in delicacy dismiss him; nor, if he should offer, was I sure, according to my feelings at that moment, that I could reject him. Here the conference closed; with a resolution on my part to become the wife of the man of my choice, should he afford me an opportunity, and with a determination on the part of my aunt, which,

under an exterior harshness, covered a great deal of genuine kindness.

“Brenton came in the evening, and I went out with him for a walk on the Battery. How it happened I know not, but he seemed to know all about my aunt's opposition to him; offered himself to me with the most generous disregard of consequences; and urged me to escape from the tyranny of my situation, as he called it, by immediately becoming his wife; and I, forgetful alike of duty and delicacy, consented. We were married; and after this imprudent step, which I then called a proof of disinterested affection, I accompanied my husband to the house of his mother, and, for a few brief months, fancied myself the happiest creature in the world.

“In a little while, however, ‘a cloud no bigger than a man's hand’ might, by an observant eye, have been seen to rise above the horizon, which but too soon, alas! spread over the whole heaven of my existence. Brenton, who had at first been all devotion, now began to treat me with occasional coldness, and finally with marked neglect. He was greatly embarrassed, as he told me, in his affairs, and recommended to me the policy of being reconciled to my aunt, with the hope of obtaining pecuniary aid; and as my own feelings dictated the same course—though not for the same ends—a reconciliation was very soon effected. But the result was not what he had anticipated; for very soon after this event, my aunt gave me to understand that she had settled upon me a certain annuity—far more than I had ever expected—but to cut off all

hopes of further assistance, had already made her will, in which, with the exception of a respectable provision for Emmeline, and certain sums left for charitable purposes, Morville was named heir to all which she had a right to dispose of.

"The mask was now off. The man upon whose truth I had rested all my hopes of happiness, had the cruelty to taunt me with my folly in marrying for love, and curse his own rashness in throwing himself away upon a portionless idiot. The blow was as terrible as unexpected; and I sank under it. This was soon followed by his total desertion of her who had

Loved not wisely, but too well,'

for the endearments of one who, under the guise of friendship, had stolen into my confidence to sting me with her falsehood—the unprincipled Emmeline—and this desertion was in a short time legalized by an abominable law of the land, which makes the holy marriage vow even less binding than a civil contract. But, though abandoned—*divorced*—and left alone to struggle with misfortune, there was still one drop of comfort remaining in my cup of bitterness,—the title of WIFE, of which I had been most unjustly deprived, was never bestowed upon my rival,—who in turn was deserted, and left to die an outcast from society. Poor, misguided Emmeline, although I could not but admit that her punishment was just, even then I did not rejoice over her misfortune, and most sincerely have I learned to pity her since.

"With broken health, and a bruised spirit, I now

yielded to the solicitations of my aunt, and returned to the home I had so foolishly, not to say wickedly, abandoned, taking with me the babe whose innocent brow had never been blessed with a father's kiss, and the faithful Judy Riley, who had clung to my fortunes with a fidelity that no money could have purchased, and no trials could have shaken. But the house was not what it had been. I missed the gayety of Emmeline, and the kindness of Morville, who had left some months before for Europe; and age, with its attendant infirmities, began to have effect upon the kind temper and equable spirits of my aunt. In a few months this excellent relation died, and her death was soon followed by that of my little darling. This latter event did not grieve me as much as one would naturally suppose. I had learned that efforts were to be made by the Brenton family to take her from me, and I felt it would be easier to resign my child to the cold embrace of death, than to the hands of her unnatural father.

“Hitherto I had had something to live for. Hope, like a gentle star, had never ceased to twinkle through the deep gloom that surrounded me. But now that light was extinguished, and a darkness that might be felt, rested alike upon the present and the future, and most truly might I say in my desolation, that for me

‘Joy has no balm, and affliction no sting.’

Yet even then, although I had forgotten my God, he did not forget me, but commissioned an angel, in the form of a little child, to seek me out, and, by re-

kindling within my bosom the dormant spark of affection for my kind, awoke me to a new, a pleasurable, feeling of existence. This Child-Angel was Kitty Barry.

[Here follows an account of her meeting with this child, which I need not describe.]

“To her dying grandmother, I had promised that Kate should be brought up in the faith of her family; and, although I had always looked upon that faith as heathenism in a modified form, I religiously determined to fulfil my promise. For this purpose I endeavored to secure for her the advantages of a Catholic school, and send her regularly to church with Judy Riley. But home teachings—the teachings that give the bias to the mind of childhood, and extend their influence to the remotest period of existence—were entirely neglected. How indeed could I attempt to instruct, who was profoundly ignorant of even the rudiments of Christian knowledge? I had been taught, it is true, in a school in which the Bible was used as a class book, and had attended meetings in which many ‘gifted preachers’ held forth upon the great truths of the Gospel—often sadly obscured by the contradictory expositions of different speakers—and in consequence called myself a Christian. Not a professor, however; for the particular form of Christianity I was to adopt I had not yet decided upon. But I was nevertheless a Christian. Like too many, I fear, in this age of boasted intelligence, I was a Christian without attaching any definite idea to the name, or without allowing it to have any influence upon my faith or practice.

“As soon as she had learned to read, a certain portion of the Catechism was daily given to Kate to commit to memory, and she would often come to recite her lesson to me before school hours. — I could not well refuse compliance with this request of the child, yet, if the truth must be spoken, would much rather have been excused. But this act, simple as it may seem, was the means made use of by the Almighty to bring me to a knowledge of Himself. The lessons intended for simple childhood, had, through God’s grace, the effect of scattering the mists of prejudice and error which had clouded the mind of the woman, and of softening into flesh the heart of stone. Was I not right, when I said that it was to this dear child I was indebted for my first knowledge of religion?

“About this time Morville returned from abroad, for the purpose of making a final settlement of his affairs, previous to dedicating his life and talents to the service of his Maker. Our meeting, although it could not fail to awaken many recollections of a painful nature, was a source of much real happiness to both. The love he had once felt for me, time and circumstances had changed into a friendship that was rendered permanent by the bond of Christian unity; and the respect I had always entertained for his character, but which fear of encouraging a passion I was unable to return had made me unwilling to manifest, I could now without impropriety declare. We were now professors of the same faith;—worshippers at the same altar;—members of the same mystical body;—how could we be anything but friends? Friends we

were, and friends we are, even though seas divide us, for often, from the field of his missionary labors in the far, far East, do I receive messages of kind remembrance from my friend and brother. Nor has his friendship been always confined to words. Before he left this country for the last time, and altogether without my knowledge, he made over to me and the child of my adoption, a large portion of the wealth he had inherited from his uncle.

“The wish to bring Kate up as plainly as possible, and prevent her becoming the prey of some unprincipled fortune-hunter, induced me early to leave the city, and take up my abode in so obscure a place as Iphigenia; and the latter wish influenced me in the encouragement I gave to your early affection for my child; for I believed she could be happier as the wife of an honest farmer than of a heartless man of fashion, who, for the sake of her fortune—which, I may now tell you, is very handsome—might pretend to forget her plebeian origin. My reason for leaving so suddenly our comfortable little home, was the mistake which Brenton had fallen into, in believing Kate to be the child I had lost, and his threat to call in the assistance of the law to take her from me. This, of course, he could not do, but he had it in his power to annoy me greatly, by the publicity that would thence be given to the past, and for his sake, even more than my own, I wished all recollections of our unhappy story to be forgotten.”

Here ended the narrative of Mrs. Rollins ; in which, although all the facts in her eventful story were faithfully recorded, she failed to do herself justice ; for the charities of Mrs. Rollins, long before she became a Christian, were felt in places where she was never seen ; and it is hardly too much to believe, that, as in the case of Cornelius the Centurion, her alms had “ascended for a memorial in the sight of God,” or that the growth of grace must have been proportionally rapid, in a heart so well prepared for its reception by the exercise of good works.

XVIII.

THE REALIZATION OF OUR WISHES DOES NOT ALWAYS BRING HAPPINESS. ALFRED FINDS HIS PARENTS.

HAVING received the nuptial benediction from one who sustained with much dignity the exalted character of a bishop in the Church of God, a divinely appointed pastor over a portion of the flock of Christ, Alfred and his bride, with Mrs. Rollins and her faithful Judy, set out on an excursion to New York, where they arrived the evening of that eventful night in which the attempt was made by Wash, first upon the property, and then upon the life of Edward Ketchum. The papers of the next morning were, as a matter of

course, filled with exaggerated and in many cases contradictory accounts of the transaction; and boys might have been seen flying in all directions, and crying out, at the top of their poor cracked voices,

"Here's the extry Jackall! Got a full account of the horrible robbery and murder! Here they are."

The words "robbery and murder" drew the attention of Alfred to a ragged little disseminator of knowledge, who was at that moment passing under the window at which he was standing, and he became the purchaser, for three cents, of an "Extry" which contained the following:

"BOLD ATTEMPT AT ROBBERY AND MURDER.

"The citizens, in the neighborhood of — Place, were aroused from their comfortable beds this morning, between the hours of one and two, by the appalling cry of "Murder!" which was soon ascertained to proceed from the noble mansion of Mrs. Ketchum, a lady well known to, and respected by the whole community for her piety and benevolence. A number of persons soon collected about the house, which, upon being admitted, they discovered had been burglariously entered, in the early part of the night, by the notorious WASH MALLISON, who has long been known to our Police as one intimately connected with some of the most daring villains that have infested our city for years. His object was, evidently, to rob the house, and then, most probably, set fire to it, that all trace of his crime might be obliterated. But, provi-

dentially, the son of Mrs. Ketchum, a most exemplary young man, who slept in an adjoining room, was roused from sleep by a watchman striking his rounds, and caught the robber just as he was making off with his booty. He immediately grappled with, and would have succeeded in securing him, after two pistols had been discharged at him, but for a severe wound he received in the left breast, near the region of the heart, from a dirk, or some sharp instrument, with which the villain was armed. The young ruffian is now in the Tombs, and we are sorry to add that the case of Mr. Ketchum is considered critical in the highest degree. Most sincerely do we hope, that this outrage upon the peace of the community and the well-being of society, may meet with the punishment it has so daringly provoked. Some idle gossip is afloat this morning, that has taken its rise from the remark of a poor crazy creature, who forced her way up to the room where the wounded man lay. But, we assure our readers, it has not the shadow of a foundation to rest upon. The high moral character which Mr. Ketchum has always sustained, is the strongest contradiction such a story could receive; and, besides, we happen to know, that this very day he was to lead to the hymeneal altar one of the most beautiful, accomplished, and pure-minded of our city belles." Thus said, and thus reasoned the "Extry," and, with such a vehicle, we do not wonder at the rapid diffusion of correct information.

Alfred was greatly moved by what he had read. The recollections of his childhood were all connected

with Ketchum, at whose hands he had received repeated acts of kindness; and he felt peculiarly attached to him, believing him to have been the friend of his parents. He explained to the ladies his reason for leaving them, and then sought the house of Mrs. Ketchum, to ascertain how far the report in the paper was to be relied on. As he ascended the steps, the door opened, and Brenton came out.

"Ah, Spencer," said he, with a familiar nod, "glad to see you. Bad business, this of Ketchum's."

"It is, indeed!" said Alfred; then asked with much earnestness, "Is there any hope of recovery?"

"Can't say. Very little, however, I'm afraid. By the by, Spencer, your coming is very opportune. Ketchum has commissioned me to make certain inquiries, in the answers to which you are not a little interested. If you have half an hour to spare, and will throw it away upon me, we will proceed at once upon our errand."

Alfred readily agreed to accompany him, not a little wondering at the hint which had been dropped, but asked no questions; and they walked down Broadway together, Brenton talking all the time upon the affairs of the past night, and the common news of the day, with as much indifference as if the friend he had left was in the enjoyment of perfect health and happiness.

The business in which Ketchum had engaged his friend was with Mallison. With very little difficulty Brenton and Alfred found the way to a place so well known as the Lion's Den, and were thence directed to

the private dwelling of the worthy proprietor, which, as I have already stated, fronted on another street, and from its appearance would have made a suitable residence for a gentleman of easy circumstances. The bell was answered by a slip-shod, unwashed, unkempt servant girl, who, in answer to the inquiry for Mr. Mallison, said she would go and see if he was up yet, and, in the mean while, desired the gentlemen to walk in. They did so; and, showing them into a handsome parlor, she left them.

Brenton picked up a paper, and seemed bent upon making himself master of its contents, while Alfred, for want of other occupation, approached the window and gazed into the street. In a few minutes his attention was called to something that was going on, not without, but within the house; for immediately overhead he heard the steps of some one walking hurriedly to and fro, with sounds of passionate weeping, mingled with low, but earnest expostulations. At length he distinctly heard these words, uttered by a shrill female voice:

"Wretch! trafficker in human flesh, this is your work! The price of one child gave you the cursed means of bringing up the other for the gallows! Give us back our honest beggary;—give me back my children! Give me them;—or take the life that you have rendered wretched forever!"

"I'll do that thing, and quick too, you infernal jade, if you don't shut up at once," was answered in the gruff tones of a man's voice. "If I hear any more of your jaw, I'll throttle you where you stand!"

Here the sounds ceased, interrupted, no doubt, by the girl who had gone to call Mallison, for she returned immediately after, and said he would be down in a minute. And in a very few minutes at the most, in morning-gown and slippers, and with the air of a nabob, the master of the house made his appearance.

"Mr. Mallison," said Brenton, after slightly returning the salutation of the other, and without any loss of time, "I have called upon you on a small matter of business this morning. But first let me ask, have you any recollection of me?"

"No, sir, not the slightest."

"But you remember a Mr. Jones, with whom you had certain dealings, about seventeen years ago?"

"Very well."

"I am he. Now, Mr. Mallison, I wish to ask you one question. Was the boy you then gave up to me, for the sum of two hundred and fifty dollars, the supposititious child of Edward Ketchum, or your own son?"

"What if I don't choose to answer?"

"You will hardly think it worth while to refuse, when you recollect that the secret, if there be one, is not alone in your keeping; or, if it were, that means may be devised to draw it from you, whether you will or not. But it will save trouble, both to you and me, to give me the answer at once. By withholding it, you can do no good to any one."

"Well," answered Mallison, coolly, "though I don't care a second-hand chaw tobacker for your threats, as I've had my satisfaction out of the feller,

I'll tell you the truth. The boy I gave to you was my own, for I thought as how that Ketchum could do better by him than I could, besides I was in hopes I could some time make Wash pay him up for his rascality towards his mother. He has done so, and the real son of Edward Ketchum is now in the Tombs, for trying to murder his father."

Alfred had listened to this brief colloquy with deep and painful interest. A terrible suspicion had flashed across his mind, the moment that mention was made of the boy, and he trembled with anxiety to have it dissipated or confirmed. With a face livid from suppressed emotion, he now turned to Brenton, and, in a husky, and almost inaudible voice, asked,

"Who—who is that boy?"

"You are he," was the answer.

"Great Heaven!" he exclaimed, and reaching forward to catch at a chair for support, missed it, and, reeling like a drunken man, fell heavily on the floor.

When restored to consciousness, he was lying on a sofa, and a lady kneeling by his side, was bathing his temples with bay-water, who, when she saw him open his eyes, said between a laugh and a cry,

"He will live! he will live! I am not altogether desolate."

"Don't be a fool," growled Mallison, who was standing on the rug, with his back to the fire, without seeming at all interested in what was going on. "There's no fear of him."

The young man raised himself slowly from his incumbent position; and sat for a few minutes, as if en-

deavoring to recollect something that had for the moment escaped him. He looked around for Brenton; but that gentleman had left the house, as soon as his purpose was accomplished, without giving the slightest heed to the condition of his companion; and he now found himself alone with those he believed to be his parents. How often had he wished, in his isolated state, to meet with one upon whose affection he might feel he had a natural claim; and yet, although in the actual presence of those who were the nearest to him on earth—the father and mother whom he had so often, in the silent watches of the night, tried to picture to himself, and as often taxed his memory in vain to bring before his mental vision one dear familiar feature—the realization of his wishes brought nothing like pleasure to his heart. Hope was lost in certainty; but his long yearning was not satisfied.

“Jefferson, my son,” said poor Sophy, “have you forgotten me entirely? Do you not know your mother?”

“Jefferson!” said he, without replying to her question. “Jefferson! I know I was not always Alfred; but Jefferson does not sound like the name I used to answer to.”

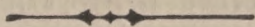
“Jeff,”—began Mallison; but he was interrupted by the young man starting from his seat, and exclaiming in a very excited manner,

“That is it! that is it! *JEFF was the name.* All is now confirmed!” and he covered his face with his hands, as if to shut out some object too horrible to be looked upon.

In a little while he became more calm; and then, having first related, as briefly as possible, the few events of his life, entered into conversation with his parents, in which the characters of both were laid bare before him, and he shuddered to contemplate the moral degradation into which they were fallen. But this was no time for idle lamentation. The evil that was done could not be remedied. He must now be up and doing, and endeavor to avert the consequences which must naturally follow crime; for he trembled to think of what his gentle Kate would suffer, should the disgrace of a felon's death to his brother—justly merited as it was by that brother's deeds—fall upon her husband; and the thought of Kate now urged him to a speedy departure, that he might be the first to acquaint her with the painful tidings.

Poor Alfred!—I cannot call him Jeff;—nor should I. Alfred was the name he received in baptism; and by the name of Alfred he became the husband of Catherine; that name has since been confirmed to him by the law of the land, and it is the name by which he is to be known in all days to come. Poor Alfred! he had taken upon himself an irksome task. But Kate was a genuine wife; and heavy, indeed, would have been the burthen that she would fail to lighten. It is true, her cheek paled and her lip quivered, when the astounding truth was made known to her; but, though she did not affect to treat it lightly, she spoke of it as an evil that must be borne with humble submission to the will of heaven, whose chastisements—whether

they come in the form of poverty, or the death of those we love—or, what is worse than all these, disgrace—are always sent in kindness—to wean our hearts from the things of this world, and raise our desires to the things of God.



XIX.

TEMPORARY EVIL IS OFTEN PRODUCTIVE OF EVERLASTING GOOD. THE DEATH OF EDWARD KETCHUM.

BEFORE the preceding revelation had been made to Kate, Ketchum was put in possession of all the facts which had been gathered by Brenton in his visit to Mallison. The effect of this knowledge was in the highest degree alarming;—accelerating, by the agitation consequent thereon, his approaching dissolution. Of this he seemed fully aware; and, immediately upon the departure of Brenton, asked to see his lawyer; to whom he gave the necessary directions concerning his will; and then most earnestly begged that he would use every means in his power to save the life of the young man, who had become the instrument, in the hands of a mysterious Providence, of cutting short his existence. To this the man of business answered as men of business are wont to do, that he would do his

best, without the least intention, however, of doing anything in the matter ; and took his leave.

Mrs. Ketchum, who had been for some time importunate to see her son, was now admitted. She had been what is called, a very tender mother. That is, she had humored him in all his caprices, and been most lenient to all his faults. But to the true tenderness of a parent—that tenderness which has regard only to the welfare of its object—she could lay no claim. All her indulgence arose less from affection for her son, than from love of her own ease ; and she, who would fain have managed the affairs of all her acquaintances, so long as that management gave her importance in the eyes of the world, could not stoop to the drudgery of controlling the child whose guardianship had been committed by Heaven to her care. Edward Ketchum grew up to man's estate without having known the benefit of salutary restraint. And this she and her coterie called *love*.

But, notwithstanding her want of genuine feeling, Mrs. Ketchum could not behold the altered appearance of her son without being affected ; and, for a few minutes, tears—real tears—coursed one another down her withered cheeks. But habit soon regained the ascendancy it had long held over nature ; and, in the peculiar cant of her class, she began an harangue on the subject of religion, when she was interrupted by Edward, who exclaimed, with much impatience,

“ Let us have no preaching, mother, if you please. I am not in a condition to listen to a repetition of barren words. Had the religion of which I have heard

so much—but seen so little—possessed any of the power which you ascribe to it, I would not now be lying on my death-bed.”

“What, my son, what can you mean?”

“That, if the charity which religion inculcates, as you say, had been extended to poor Sophy Ingraham, I would not have received my death from the hand of her son.”

“Was that young ruffian, then, really the son of that most wretched girl?”

“Really *her* son, Madam—and *your* grandson,” was the bitter reply.

Mrs. Ketchum was silent. For the first time, her neglect of, and harshness toward, the orphan daughter of her husband’s cousin, appeared to give her conscience a momentary twinge. But the miserable plea of expediency soon came to her relief, and she said,

“Edward, you are ungenerous, not to say unjust. In my efforts to prevent you throwing yourself away upon one in no respect worthy of you, I could have had no object in view but the maintenance of the respectability of your family; and I am grateful to heaven, as you ought to be, that, through my humble instrumentality, the one great end has been accomplished.”

“Yes,” added her son, “at the expense of happiness, of honor, and of life. But, mother,” he continued, “we will talk of this no more. The evil cannot now be remedied.”

“We should call nothing evil that comes from the hand of heaven.”

"Surely that is evil which is brought upon us by our own folly, passion or pride? Had this poor girl met with that treatment at our hands which her helplessness, simplicity and near relationship entitled her to, she would have been wife good enough for any man, and my conscience been charged with many crimes less than it is now burdened with. But let us waive the subject. By my death, as you are aware, the property inherited from my grandfather must pass into the hands of strangers. But as this house and lot were purchased since his death, they cannot be affected by his will, and you will find, when all is over, that your comfort has not been uncared for. Neither has she been forgotten who was willing to share, not my fortunes, but my *fortune*. That which was intended as a bridal gift, may yet be put to its proper use, when the donor shall be numbered with the things that were." Here, in spite of his affected stoicism, the thought of death, for which he was so unprepared, forced itself upon him with all its terrible reality, and a deep, though stifled, groan escaped him.

Mrs. Ketchum had stood at many a death-bed; and had acquired quite a reputation, among a particular class, for the zeal and efficacy with which she had exhorted the dying. But now she knew not what to say; for she was conscious that the hollowness of her pretensions, to more piety than her neighbors, was no secret to her clear-sighted son. At last she proposed to send for her minister. But to this he would by no means consent.

"Why should you send for him, mother? What can he do for me?"

"He will pray with you—pray for you;—and you know 'the prayer of the righteous availeth much.'"

"Not for me," he answered; and closing his eyes, turned impatiently away, as if to put an end to the conversation, a purpose that was fully accomplished by the entrance of his medical attendant.

The great abilities of this gentleman had obtained for him admission into many a family, whose doors otherwise would have been barred against him, by their hatred of his creed; for he was so old-fashioned, as to adhere, alike through good report and through evil, to a faith that in this country is too generally regarded with jealousy, hatred or contempt. He was a Catholic; thoroughly grounded in the doctrines of his church, and practically all which a belief in those doctrines required of him; yet, with all this, no man was more popular than Dr. Kirker; for his skill was undoubted, and his candor was equal to his skill.

He had been absent from his post little more than an hour; but in that short time a very great change had taken place in the condition of his patient; and he, to whom disease was familiar in all its phases, saw at a glance that no hope could be entertained of his recovery; and now went about the performance of the most painful part of his duty—to prepare the dying man for his speedy dissolution.

He sat down by the bedside; and, with the tenderness of a father, informed Edward Ketchum of his approaching end; and then, with the earnestness of one to whom the great truths of the Gospel are something more than mere speculation, besought him to

think seriously of what he had yet to do to secure his eternal welfare.

Dr. Kirker was animated by no proselytizing spirit. Convinced, as he was, of the divine origin of that form of Christianity which he professed, it was but reasonable that he should wish to see it embraced by the whole human family. But, knowing that faith is purely the gift of God, he seldom did more than to urge upon the dying sinner the necessity of repentance, without which no man can be saved; although he was ever ready and happy to instruct all, who wished for instruction, in the sublime doctrines of the Catholic church, which affords so many means of grace to the humble and inquiring penitent. In this way, he had been an instrument of salvation in the hands of the Almighty to many who, through a long life, had lived "without God in the world," and only at the close of their mortal career were brought to cry, "Too late have I known thee, O Ancient Truth! too late have I loved thee, O Ancient Beauty!"

He now entered upon the subject of religion with his patient; not with the view of combatting the errors of belief in which, as he thought, the son of Mrs. Ketchum must have been nurtured, but simply, for the discharge of what he conceived to be an imperative duty. How great was his pleasure, then, after Ketchum had listened with respectful attention to what he had to say, on the preparation necessary for the great change that must soon take place, to find him anxious to know something of the Ancient Faith, which, he had been taught to believe, was ut-

terly unlike that which was professed by his mother and her friends.

With a lucidness that left nothing for after explanation, the good Doctor entered upon the desired exposition; and was rejoiced to find how attentively every word was listened to, and how readily it was comprehended; and still more rejoiced to hear—after a short time spent in silent self-communing—his patient ask that a priest might be brought;—a request that was immediately complied with, by Dr. Kirker going himself for the venerable Father V——, whose zeal and charity were respected even by those who were loudest in condemnation of his creed. The earnest desire of the dying man—to be admitted into the One Fold—was readily granted, and thus was one more soul added to the already goodly number of those, whose prayers are constantly offered up before the throne, for “perseverance unto the end” of their earthly benefactor.

The spiritual strength afforded by the reception of the “Food of Angels,” was not without its effect upon the sinking frame of the sufferer, which suddenly appeared to acquire a vigor, that awakened hopes in many, that it would yet be able to shake off the grasp of death. But this change did not deceive the experienced physician; who, knowing the weight of sin, under which the mind had labored, to be removed, expected a temporary renovation of the powers of the body, yet knew how futile were those hopes; but feeling no apprehension for the soul’s health of his patient, and wisely thinking, that “sufficient for

the day is the evil thereof," did nothing to discourage them, although he as surely did nothing to keep them alive. The expectations of the Doctor were soon realized. In three days Edward Ketchum was a corpse; and the grief of his mother for his death, was far less than her mortification, at finding how little her example had prevailed with him, who, at the moment when all earthly considerations are but as dust in the balance, could turn, for consolation, from the pure wells of evangelical religion, to the broken cisterns of popery. Verily, her glory had departed!

XX.

CONCLUSION.

THE day after the funeral of Edward Ketchum, which he had attended with a grief unknown to any of the "dear five hundred friends," who filled the numerous carriages that ostentatiously paraded Broadway upon this occasion, Alfred paid his first visit to the Tombs; when, upon asking if he could be allowed to see Washington Mallison, he was answered in the affirmative, and then placed by the gentlemanly keeper under the escort of an officer, who conducted him at once to the cell of that wretched young man, which was a small room in the upper part of the building, well aired and scrupulously clean.

Seventeen years had elapsed since the brothers were separated;—and the effect of time is change; so that the young men might have met in open day, and neither have recognized in the other the play-mate—or, rather, the fellow-sufferer—of his childhood; but as by the uncertain light of the cell, which was admitted through a narrow aperture at the top, even friends might have met for a moment as strangers, it is little wonder that Alfred could discover in the prisoner no resemblance to what he now dimly remembered of his brother Wash.

News had that morning reached the prisoner of Ketchum's death; and the thought, which he now admitted for the first time, that he was indeed guilty of murder, had a most depressing effect upon his spirits, which had hitherto been sustained by the hope that he was likely to be charged with burglary only; with, perhaps, an attempt to kill; and so often had he listened to the feats of housebreakers, and their adroitness in escaping from prison, that he had been brought to look upon burglary as no crime, and to regard the punishment of it as scarcely an evil.

I have said, that the disposition of this young man had been originally good:—that is, speaking after the manner of men;—and, notwithstanding his vaunted indifference to crime, he had never seriously contemplated the spilling of human blood; although he should have known, that the career upon which he had entered so eagerly, seldom stops short of that; but he was now a murderer—guilty alike before God and man;—and the horror of his crime, or, more

properly speaking, the dread of the penalty attached to it, had sunk him into a stupor of despair, and he was utterly unconscious of the presence of Alfred and the officer, until the latter called him by name.

He raised his face, which had been resting on his hands, and demanded, in a surly tone,

“Well, what’s wanting?”

“A gentleman wishes to speak to you,” was the reply, and the officer stepped outside the door.

“Well,” said Wash, looking up in the face of Alfred, “if you’ve any thing to say to me, say it quick.” When glancing at the black dress of his visitor, which was worn out of respect to Ketchum, he continued, “O, you’m one of them ’ere parsons, I s’pose, what go about the city preachin’ temperance, an’ morality, an’ all that sort o’ thing, to people who’m, maybe, as good as theirselves. But you’ve come to the wrong shop. I’ve no time for nonsense.”

“You are mistaken,” said Alfred, with a strong effort at composure. “I’m not a clergyman, nor a preacher of any kind. I have come as a friend, to learn what I can do for you.”

“Friend!” returned Wash, with a sneer. “You mean a lawyer? But I’m afraid you’ll find my case hardly worth undertakin’. Yet, if you’ve a mind to try it, you’ll be well paid for your trouble. But it’s no use!” and he shook his head despondingly.

“I am not a lawyer—” Alfred began, when he was interrupted by Wash impatiently exclaiming,

“What the —— are you then?”

“One who has both the means and the will to aid

you, if, upon a full knowledge of your case, I find I can do so without violating my conscience."

"Oh, I see! You want me to turn States' evidence against myself. But you don't come it over this child in that 'ere way, old feller."

"That I do not seek the means of injuring you, and that I would not injure you if I had the means, you will be convinced, when I tell you that—I am your brother!"

Wash started to his feet. He was more than two years the elder, and remembered well poor little Jeff, and his sudden and mysterious disappearance, which he had often importuned his mother to explain, and had received no answer but her tears. But the frequent outpourings of the mother's sorrow for the loss of her child, had kept alive in his heart the memory of his brother; and with feelings of joy—purer than any he had known for years—he now stood up before him. He did not, however, even offer his hand to him he had hugged in his arms a thousand times in his infancy—for he felt the difference that must ever separate the man of seeming character and the blood-stained criminal;—but, when Alfred threw himself upon his neck, there was a mingling of hearts as well as of tears.

From this time, for many succeeding weeks, the meeting of the brothers was almost a daily occurrence; and the effect of these meetings was soon proved to be highly beneficial to the prisoner. He now began to look upon crime in a new light. Hitherto he had viewed it only in its relation to society;

but he now saw that the injury inflicted upon the community, was sure, sooner or later, to recoil upon the perpetrator; and what was far better, was soon enabled by divine grace to see the enormity that even our smallest sins must assume in the sight of Infinite Justice. The former consideration brought with it a remorse that filled his heart with bitterness; while the latter made his soul to overflow with sorrow for the past. How consoling is it to the sinner, at a moment like this, to know there is One who has said, that "an humble and a contrite heart He will never despise;" and we have reason to hope, with the good Father V——, whom Alfred had introduced into the cell of his brother, that with "an humble and a contrite heart" poor Wash at last was blessed.

In the mean time, as a true bill had been found against him, and he was soon to be brought to trial, upon a charge of wilful murder, Alfred, the only friend who stirred in his behalf, for Mallison openly declared his wish to see him hanged, was active in his endeavors to procure for the prisoner the best counsel in the country; for all of which he was more than repaid by the gratitude of the criminal, the sympathy of Mrs. Rollins, and the affectionate approval of his noble-hearted Kate. But, except for the gratification the recollection must ever afford his own breast, his efforts might as well have been spared. Wash was never called before an earthly tribunal. He, who, for His own wise purposes, had permitted him to become the minister of His justice, now interposed in his favor, and kindly took him hence on the very eve of his

trial, and while he was yet ignorant of his relationship to his victim. He died repeating these words, which he had often heard from the lips of his spiritual father :

“ Out of the depths I have cried to thee, O Lord : Lord, hear my voice.

“ Let thy ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

“ If thou, O Lord, wilt mark iniquities, Lord, who shall stand it.

“ For with thee, there is merciful forgiveness : and by reason of thy law I have waited for thee, O Lord.

“ My soul hath relied on his word : my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

“ Because with the Lord there is mercy : and with him plentiful redemption.”

R. I. P.

I have little more to relate. By the death of Edward Ketchum, the PURCHASE, according to the will of his grandfather, passed to the heir male of old Thomas Hooper, who, upon diligent inquiry, proved to be no other than our friend Alfred ; and Mrs. Ketchum, with all her management, lived to see the estate, which she would have kept in her family at any sacrifice, in possession of the son of poor neglected Sophy Ingraham. This was the drop of bitterness that made her cup run o'er ; and from that time until her death, which happened but a few months since, she was never seen in any of the scenes of her

former glory. Close upon the death of the old lady, followed the marriage of her whom she had chosen to be the bride of her son, and Edward's bridal gift was then put to its proper use. The imprisonment, and subsequent death of her son, had fallen with crushing weight upon the weak brain of poor Sophy, and she sank into utter imbecility, and her death, which followed in a very little while, was regarded as a happy relief to the very few who cared for her, and, let us hope, a still more happy relief to herself. Public indignation was strongly roused against Mallison, when the true story of the misguided Wash became known, and leaving the Den, he removed with his ill-gotten gear to a sister city, where he resumed his old business, under a new name, with every prospect of success. But his turbulent disposition often led him to meddle in the affairs of his neighbors; and he lost his life in a church-burning frolic—a favorite amusement with the people of that part of the world—and as his property was without a claimant, it went, of course, to the State, and not as much was saved out of it as would pay for a stone to his memory.

Brenton still lives; but broken in health and in spirits, and supported—although she will not see him—by the bounty of the wife whom he abandoned, and most cruelly repudiated, in the morning of her life. And she—still adhered to by the faithful Judy—lives, honored and beloved, in the family of her adopted daughter, who is hardly willing to admit that her love for Alfred and her little ones is any stronger than that she bears the protectress of her infancy; and

this unchangeableness of affection is one of the most beautiful traits in the character of Kate. The ruffians who accompanied Wash to the house of Mrs. Ketchum, although they escaped that night, have since succeeded in working their way up to Sing Sing; and, though last not least, the pious Joel Roberts, erewhile the valet of Edward Ketchum, and lay chaplain of his mother, and the aider and abettor, moreover, in many a successful burglary, having suddenly left the city after the death of his master, although no one suspected the part he had taken in Wash's attempt, has, after an absence of a few years, returned among us in an entirely new character. It seems that, during his absence, he attended a gentleman in his travels through Europe; and that, upon two or three occasions, when on the continent, they were hospitably entertained in certain religious houses. Here the observant Joel saw enough to enable him to fabricate something like the dress worn by their inmates; and he is now edifying the pure and the pious of this hemisphere, with lectures on CONFESSIO, and the other Abominations of Popery—at a shilling a head—under the character of a converted MONK!

Our opinions of this story were many, and, of course, a little contradictory. One thought it too long for the interest it was intended to create; another that it was quite too short for the full development of the characters introduced—altogether too many for the space into which they were crowded—

and a third, that it was wanting in poetic justice, in killing off Ketchum and suffering Brenton to live, as if life were not sometimes a greater punishment than death. For her part, Kate thought that Mrs. Rollins—whose style of thought and expression she pronounced of the *highflutin* order—was sadly deficient in spirit, in decently supporting, in his old age, the man who had treated her so shamefully years before. She knew it was right to return good for evil, and all that; but it did not seem natural to her that one who had suffered so much injury from another, should not only forgive the injurer, but actually load him with favors:

“And thereby,” said her mother, “‘heap coals of fire upon his head,’ and awake him, if anything could, to a just sense of his past undeservings.”

“After what we have heard,” said Anastasia, who was our next story teller, “I hardly know how to offer anything of mine for your entertainment. But if you will excuse the deficiencies of one who has had little experience, and is without invention, I will do what I can to increase the common stock.”

Eulalie.

A BIT OF MORALITY BY ANASTASIA.

Rest has come to her at last.

ALICE CAREY.

I.

THE WANT.

"How beautiful!" was the exclamation of almost every stranger present, as Eulalie, slightly resting on the arm of a young man of noble presence, passed gracefully through Mrs. Houghton's crowded rooms, to pay her respects to the mistress of the mansion; and the exclamation was invariably followed by the question, "Who is she?"

"It is Eulalie, the poetess," was the answer; "one of the most accomplished, as well as most beautiful women of the day. And, it may be added, one of the most fortunate also; for, besides being the only child of a millionaire, she has just become the wife of one already highly distinguished in his profession

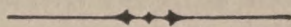
of the law, and who bids fair to equal in a few years the greatest orators of the land."

"How happy she must be!" sighed a pale little lady, a poetess too, whose whole life had been an unsuccessful struggle with untoward circumstances; and in these words she only echoed the general voice.

Yes, Eulalie was beautiful, accomplished, and eminently fortunate; fortunate, not merely in the world's meaning of that word, but fortunate in the early possession of fame, the coveted treasure of the poet, and in the rich return of love already made to her own free gift of affection. But was she happy? They who saw her only, as on this night, surrounded by admiring throngs, would have answered, Yes. And they who knew her only as the successful poetess would have answered, Yes. And the poor, the recipients of her bounty, who ever coupled a blessing with her name, would also have answered, Yes. Yet any one who had marked the peculiar smile that curled at times her beautiful lip; the sadness that, in her gayest moments, would suddenly cloud her radiant countenance; the shadow, as of some unrevealed grief, that ever lay in the depths of her clear dark eyes, would have hesitated before he gave the same answer.

No, strange as it may seem, Eulalie, whose flower-strewed path through life had been all sunshine, whose cup had been brimmed with the wine of gladness, whose head had ever been pillowed on some true and loving heart, and who had never given utterance to a wish that was not gratified, was not happy. It was in vain that she repeated to herself the plaudits of the

world, and strove to reason her heart into a belief of its happiness. All would not do. However she might impose upon others, she could not impose upon herself. There was a void in her heart that nothing yet had filled—a yearning that nothing yet had satisfied; and nightly as she lay her head upon the pillow, weary in her vain pursuit of pleasure, she repeated again and again the words of the wise man of old, “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!”



II.

THE DREAM.

THAT night Eulalie dreamed that, while walking in a beautiful lane, hedged on either side with flowering shrubs and trees of luxuriant foliage, and vocal with the songs of birds, she was met by a man of majestic appearance, whose face was that of one of middle age, but whose hair and beard were white as wool, and whose only garment was a simple tunic of white, that reached a little below the knee.

“Who art thou?” she asked.

“Time, the Destroyer,” he answered. “Behold my work.” And the scene was instantly changed, and she found herself alone upon a plain that extended afar to the sea, upon whose shore lay the wrecks of many a goodly bark, that were rotting piece by piece away.

She looked around her and saw nothing but ruins. Temples, and palaces, and triumphal arches, were, as by some convulsion of nature, alike cast down, and the peasant had built his hut—now also a ruin—among their broken columns, while unclaimed herds were browsing the scanty herbage that forced its way up among scattered fragments of a mighty amphitheatre, where thousands upon thousands had shouted with delight at the exhibition of human ferocity and human suffering: and away to the right she beheld what had once been a city, now almost buried beneath the sand-drifts of uncounted ages.

Then again the scene changed, and she stood alone, before a yawning cavern, the gloom of which no human eye could penetrate, and at her feet lay the corse of a shrivelled old man. This she knew to be the entrance to the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and he at her feet was Time—Time lying dead at the threshold of Eternity. And wondering, she awoke.



III.

BLIND NANNIE.

THE next morning Eulalie rose with a weight upon her spirits—the effect, no doubt, of her strange dream—that no effort of hers could remove; and whether she busied herself with the affairs of her

household, or tried a song on the piano, or attempted to call home her wandering thoughts, and array them in her own peculiarly graceful verses, 'twas all the same—she could find no relief to the sadness that weighed upon her heart, and sat down at last in a state of almost hopeless despondency.

At this moment came “a knocking at her door,” and the knock was immediately followed by the appearance of a little old woman, dressed in a sad-colored stuff gown, with an enormous caleche on her head, that suffered but little to be seen of a face much disfigured by small-pox, and pretty effectually concealed the broad green fillet that bound her eyeless sockets.

“O, Nannie,” said Eulalie, kindly, rising and leading the blind woman to a seat, “you are early abroad this morning.”

“The day is nearly half gone, Madam, and I was up before the sun.”

“It must be very hard for one like you to have to rise so early.”

“Not at all, Madam. We who work all day are blessed with such sound sleep at night, that the indulgence of a morning nap is quite unnecessary.”

“O how beautiful!” exclaimed Eulalie, taking from the hands of the woman the netting she had brought home. “Really, Nannie, in this you have outdone yourself.”

“It is a pleasure, Madam, to exert oneself, when sure of the praise that you are so ready to bestow upon success. We, who have to labor for our daily bread,

ought, and do, I believe, receive with thankfulness the money we may earn. But money is not all we work for, though 'tis generally the most that we get," said Nannie, and notwithstanding the slight reproach, of those who pay grudgingly what they owe, contained in her words, there was nothing of unkindness or querulousness in her tone.

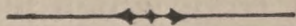
"Nannie," said Eulalie, as the blind woman, after receiving her money, rose to depart, "there is a secret in your keeping that I wish to make myself mistress of."

"If it does not in any way compromise another, you have only to tell me what it is, and it is yours."

"It is simply to know how one afflicted as you are, can always appear so happy?"

"I not only appear happy, Madam, but am so. It is true, I am poor, and blind, and old. But poverty should not be regarded by the Christian as wholly evil, since it was the chosen condition of Him to whom belonged not only 'the earth and the fulness thereof,' but all that the eye of Infinity surveys. Blindness, you will say, must shut out from me all that the earth has beautiful to look upon, and so it does. But it also preserves me from sinning with my eyes, and obliges me to a frequent contemplation of the world within; and unlovely as age may appear to the young and prosperous, it is not altogether without its charms to the weary wayfarer in the journey of life, who feels that every step towards the grave, brings him so much nearer his eternal rest. Ah, Madam, did we but be-

lieve in our hearts, what we so often profess with our lips, that whatever comes to us from the hand of God, is meant only for our good, the most wretched among us would have little cause for unhappiness."



IV.

THE WANT SUPPLIED.

"SIT down again, Nannie," said Eulalie, leading her back to the seat she had left, "and let us talk a little more of your philosophy."

The blind woman smiled.

"I have no philosophy," she answered. "That which you call philosophy, I know only as religion."

"Religion! How often," said Eulalie, sadly, "have I been told of religion, and its wonderful power of transmuting the miseries of life—the stones that lie in our path—into the pure gold of blessings; but, though I have tasked my intellect in search of it, I have not been able to find it."

"Simply because you did not seek aright. O, my dear lady, if you could divest yourself of the pride of intellect, as easily as you can cast aside an ill-befitting garment, and, arrayed in humility of spirit, place yourself as a learner in the humble school of Christianity, you would not be long in finding that which you have hitherto sought in vain."

Eulalie did not hesitate to follow the advice of the blind woman ; and, placing herself at the feet of one commissioned to teach, soon became an apt scholar in the science of religion ; and that, which she had till now regarded as the unattainable, was found by no means difficult to possess. She was afterwards made to bear many trials, from which few are exempt. But though the wealth that had made her the envy of hundreds was swept suddenly away ; though the husband, upon whose support she hoped to rely throughout the weary journey of life, in the very prime and pride of manhood was struck down by her side ; and though the hard won wreath of poetic fame was torn rudely from her brow, there was no longer a void in her heart that could not be filled, a yearning that could not be satisfied. She had found at last that peace which the world can neither give nor take away.

“O, sister mine,” said Kate, “what a pity it is our Church will not admit women to orders. The pulpit is certainly the place for which you were intended by nature. But there, don’t look so mortified, child. Your story is a very good one, though it does sound so much like a sermon of good Father Drawl’s. And now, grandpapa, we’ll thank you for your contribution to our ‘Literary Fund.’”

The Two Spirits.

A LEGEND BY GRANDFATHER GREENWAY.

By penitence th' Eternal's wrath's appeased.

SHAKSPEARE.

P R O E M.

WHEN some who now are bowed and old,
And some who in their graves are cold,
Were boys, whose stout young hearts beat high
With hope—and of their number I—
Upon a hill, from which a man,
Without much effort, could have thrown
Into the noble stream, that ran
Close at its base, a good sized stone,
There stood a house which once had been—
'Twas long before my time, I ween—
As some averred, a stately dwelling,
By far all neighboring ones excelling.
But now it had a weird look;
And, in its dress of faded white,
Might easily have been mistook

For some old mansion's ghost at night.
And though we laughed, and wagged our heads,
And shouted as we passed it by,
When heaven and earth were bright, and shone
The sun in glory in the sky,
Of all our band there was not one
Would pass it when the day was done.
The chimneys, that no use had known
For many a day, to earth were thrown ;
The broken roof let in the rain ;
The windows were without a pane ;
The doors so long had open stood,
You could not shut them if you would ;
And in the parlors, in the hall,
And in the goodly chambers all,
Were piles of withered leaves, that lay
On heaps of dust there raised by slow decay.

Around this mansion once had lain
A rich and beautiful domain,
Which one, who of an after race
Bethought, had thickly planted o'er
With trees and shrubs, that fruit or flower
Each in its proper season bore ;
And these to guard from wanton boys,
The idle and the ill-disposed
That suburbs aye infest, within
A good stone wall inclosed.
But soon, in our unstable clime,
Neglect will do the work of Time.
That wall so strong was now o'erthrown,
And not a stone left on a stone ;
And though the trees—grown wild—that still
Remained, put forth their leaves in spring,
With here and there a blossom, none
Did fruit unto perfection bring.

The lilac, currant, and the rose,
Had disappeared, or if a few
Still lingered, it was only where
Rank weeds or grass so thickly grew
Around them, one must wonder how
Their lives had been prolonged till now;
And house and grounds a common fate
Had shared—and all alike were desolate!

It now were vain that house to seek;
And just as vain to seek the hill
Where erst it stood, for here, alas!
Is nothing suffered to stand still,
But Change still follows Change so fast,
The new comes ere the old is passed!
And if that I, who have not stirred
Abroad for years—ah me! how many!—
Of places to my heart endeared
By memory, now can scarce find any—
Or, if the place should be the same,
Gone is the old familiar name,—
What wonder if the thousands, who
Through crowded streets their ways pursue,
Where once they were should daily pass,
And never dream that either was?
Yet of that house have I to tell
A tale, should make it be remembered well.

I.

I must be mad; but so is all the world.

Folly. It matters not. What is the world

To me? Nought. I am all things to myself.

FESTUS.

It is pitiful to think that there have been those who, after a pilgrimage of three score years and ten, have passed from this world to the world beyond the grave, without having made one real friend, or left behind them one who, except through the promptings of Christian charity, would beg of God to have mercy upon their poor souls! Yet such, unhappily, there have been; and of this number was Heinrich Carstein, who, having been placed by Heaven in a position in which, by proper use of the means committed to his stewardship, he could hardly have failed to gain the love and respect of his fellow-man, and, what is of infinitely more value, the approbation of his own heart—or rather of that power enthroned in every heart, and which so sternly reprehends us when we offend against it—yet went on “laying up wrath against the day of wrath,” until his death, violent and bloody though it was, was hailed by all as a universal blessing.

He died and left no friend. Yet it can hardly be said that he had never made one; for he had, indeed, made many. But, like too many in the world, he

had found it much easier to make friends than to keep them. His was a strange nature; for although he could be friendly, almost gracious, to a mere acquaintance, to those who had real claims upon his kindness, and whom he should have cherished most, because the most deserving of his love and confidence, he was so harsh and exacting that they fell from him one by one, until, in his old age, he stood in solitary malignity, a moral Upas, blasting every thing around him; when no beggar was willing to stop at his gate, nor would even a dog of his household gambol about him.

His wife, a beautiful woman, and by many years his junior, who had married him in obedience to the commands of her father, was of a nature too gentle to bear up against the stern humor of her husband, and she looked in the face of Death with a smile, when he came to summon her hence a few years after her marriage. But the smile soon faded from her pale lips, and a deep sigh followed, when she thought how selfish she had become, in wishing to pass away into the quiet of the grave, knowing, as she did, that after she was gone, there would be no one to stand between her little son and the cold, exacting selfishness of his father. She then prayed for life; but her prayer was vain, for she died in a few hours; and sorrow, which softens most hearts, seemed to render still harder the strange hard heart of Heinrich Carstein.

The child, left friendless by the death of his mother, was about five years old. In features and complexion

he was very like the parent he had lost, but in disposition too much like his surviving one; and this defect in his nature, which judicious treatment might have corrected, was made worse by the course pursued by his stern and unnatural father. Kindness he never knew; even gentle admonition he never received; but was bidden do this, or that, with a threat that any neglect of the commands of his arbitrary parent would be visited with the severest chastisement; and the threat was always made good. And the slightest punishment for even a venial fault, was to be severely flogged, or confined in a garret room for two or three days upon bread and water.

Things went on in this way for years, until endurance ceased to be a virtue; for, as it had sunk into the slavish submission of fear, it could not be elevated into the dignity of Christian forbearance; when one day, for a fault which from another would hardly have been thought deserving of a reprimand, Ulric was summoned to the garret to receive his customary flogging. He attended the summons, as usual; but not as usual did he strip to receive the threatened chastisement. Instead of this, he turned to his father with a look of determination, and said in a tone not to be mistaken:

“Father, there must be an end of this sometime, and it may as well be now as at a future day. I am too old to be treated like a child, and too much of a man to submit to the chastisement of a slave. With my own consent, you shall never strike me more.”

“Then I will without it,” said the old man fiercely,

and, trembling with passion, he raised the cowhide aloft, which in another moment would have descended in vengeance upon the shoulders of his son, if the youth had not suddenly caught it in his hands.

“Father!” he shouted in tones as fierce as the other’s, “forbear! I would not willingly raise my hand against you, but sooner than you shall strike me, I will try which is the better man,” and wresting the whip from the old man’s grasp, threw it out of the window.

Heinrich Carstein never thereafter attempted to inflict personal chastisement upon his son, but pursued towards him a series of petty annoyances that, to one of a less resolute spirit, would have been perfectly unendurable. But Ulric regarded them not; and, being no longer restrained by the fear of punishment, gave a free rein to the desires of an undisciplined heart, and soon became known as a leader in every act of profligacy which disgraced at that early day his native town.

At the time of his marriage Carstein was considered, at least, tolerably rich; but, by the great improvements made in that part of the town in which his paternal acres lay, had in a few years become immensely so. But the mode of living he had at first adopted he never departed from, and in the plain old-fashioned house, built by his father on the bank of the river, with a few blacks to do the ordinary work of his family, the master of thousands was content to live, and obliged his son—the heir of all this wealth—to suit himself, as best he could, to the contracted

views of his strange and narrow-minded father. Was this from parsimony? No. It was simply to gratify his own evil nature at the expense of the happiness of another.

It had been predicted, by the gossips of the neighborhood, that the place, left vacant by the death of Mrs. Carstein, would soon be filled, and some went so far as even to name the individual who was to fill it. Yet sixteen years were passed, and there was no more appearance of a verification of that prediction than at the hour in which it was made. Heinrich Carstein was still a widower; and such it was now supposed he would remain; when suddenly a strange rumor got abroad—how, no one could exactly say—that the old house was soon to have a new mistress, aye, and a young one—beautiful, too, and, for the time in which she lived, highly accomplished. And, for once, Rumor told the truth.

II.

Though sore the heart be moved, lady,

When bound to break its vow—

Yet if we ever loved, lady,

We must forego it now.

FESTUS.

AMONG the tenants of Carstein was a Madame Montmartin, a lady who, in her time, had been exposed to many vicissitudes of fortune, all of which

she had borne with the fortitude of a Christian. On a voyage from her native country, France, to the French settlement in Louisiana, the vessel that she was in, of which her husband was master and principal owner, was wrecked, and all on board perished, except herself and the infant at her breast. They, when the danger was thought imminent, had been placed, with some water and a few stores, in a boat, that was borne away upon the breast of the wave which overwhelmed forever their struggling bark. For three long stormy days, and three dark dreadful nights, she remained driven to and fro upon the wild and treacherous ocean. But, although she sorrowed deeply, she did not despair. The memory of a little song, that she had often heard from the lips of a pious mother, came like the whisper of Hope amid the howlings of the storm, to quiet her fears, and fill her heart with confidence in the protection of the Mother of her Lord.

She was at length picked up, although in a most exhausted state, by a Danish brig from St. Thomas, that was to make the port of ———, where Madame Montmartin and her little Amélie found friends and a home.

She had now to begin the world anew ; and finding that her skill in music and painting, and even in embroidery, was less prized by the people among whom her lot had been so strangely cast, than her ability to frame a bonnet, fashion a cap, or make a dress, with the tact of a true Frenchwoman, she undertook that which she thought would be most rapidly appreciated,

and was soon enabled by her industry—female industry was not then thought degrading—to provide for herself and her infant charge.

But the trials of Madame Montmartin were not yet at an end. A few months before the time of which I am speaking, she fell into bad health, and, as the time of Amélie was now taken up in attendance upon her, the little stock of money she had been able to lay by was soon exhausted, and in a little while she found herself in debt to her landlord, without the means, or even the prospect, of cancelling it, except in the way proposed by Carstein, and that was, to give him, as an equivalent, the hand of her daughter.

To this the poor woman at first indignantly refused to listen. But when the alternative was a prison—for even women were then subject to the barbarity of imprisonment for debt—she yielded a reluctant consent; and the gentle Amélie, who had no will but her mother's, prepared herself for the sacrifice.

And it was a sacrifice. When a very young girl, Amélie had gone to the same school with Ulric Carstein, and an attachment had sprung up between them that was likely to last—on her part, at least—for life; for though no stranger to the faults and follies—not to give them a harsher name—that for the last few years had been laid to his charge, she still felt as warmly and as kindly towards him as in the days of his innocent, suffering childhood. And yet she was going to be married to another; and that other *his* father! Her heart died within her at the thought; yet she suffered, without an audible murmur, the pre-

parations for the nuptials to go forward, for by them she should render happy the declining years of her mother, and so much oblige the kind old man who seemed to live but for her!

To live but for her? Poor simple girl! Heinrich Carstein was as blind to her beauty as he was insensible to her worth; and would, could he by such means attain the end he had in view, as soon have bound himself to age and deformity, as to the purity and grace united in the person of the young and lovely Amélie. His only object in the marriage was to wring the heart of his son, who, as he had learned, was in love with this chit, and whom, since he had placed him at defiance, he had hated with a most rancorous hatred, shocking to behold in one man towards another, but terrible when manifested by a parent towards his child; and to raise up a new family, that might one day deprive him of the rich inheritance upon which he believed his son to be looking with a longing eye, he thought would be the surest way to revenge himself upon this unfortunate youth.

O ye, to whom the guardianship of the young is entrusted, look narrowly to yourselves, lest by any means you "offend one of those little ones." Interests—not of this world only, but of eternity—are in your hands. Your words, your actions, nay, your inmost thoughts—betrayed in the tone of the voice or glance of the eye—are fraught with consequences not to be calculated to the immortal beings who surround you. The human heart can never remain long unproductive. It must bear something; flowers or weeds,

wheat or tares, love or hatred, as it is properly watched over and cultivated, or left open to the inroads of the evil passions of our fallen nature. And if, by precept or example, or the want of example, the germ of love is destroyed in the youthful breast, its place will very soon be filled by a plant of an opposite quality; and while the dews of Divine Grace are necessary to keep alive the former, the latter thrives and grows strong amid the hot and baleful blasts of domestic strife. But he "who sows the wind shall reap the whirlwind," and sudden destruction shall assuredly overtake all who turn to evil uses the meanest of the gifts of God. This was the sin of Heinrich Carstein. For the gratification of a heart that had said to Evil, "Be thou my Good," he had trampled out the love which a beneficent Creator had planted in the bosom of his son, and encouraged, in its stead, the growth of hatred and all uncharitableness. In this manner he had sown the wind.

III.

SAVILLA.—Can you suspect who may have murdered him?

BERNARDO.—I know not what to think.

SAVILLA.—Can you name any

Who had an interest in his death?

BERNARDO.—Alas!

I can name none who had not, and those most

Who most lament that such a deed was done.—THE CENCI.

ONE Saturday, about a month before the day named for the wedding of his father and Amélie, Ulric left

home, to join a party of young friends, who, for the purposes of fishing and sea-bathing, had gone for a week to an island not far from the town. He did not inform the old gentleman of his intention to absent himself at that time, either because he did not think his permission to do so at all necessary, or was unwilling, at that particular moment, to interfere with the amusement of his worthy progenitor, who was exercising himself with the cowhide, of which his son had once had such a thorough knowledge, upon the back and shoulders of a poor boy, named Jake, one of his slaves, who had been guilty of some trifling misdemeanor. This going without leave had become a circumstance of such frequent occurrence of late, that the elder Carstein scarcely even alluded to it in his brief conversations with his son, and the son never thought of apologizing to his father, for the want of respect so apparent in such a proceeding.

In passing through the town, he paused for a few moments at the door of Madame Montmartin. It was evidently his intention first to enter it; but was prevented by hearing, in the sweet voice of Amélie, to an air originally gay, but which, modulated by the feelings of the singer, was now touchingly sad, the following

CANZONET.

“The Love the poet sings

Is ideal,

Or soon it taketh wings:

But the real,

A glow o'er earthly things

Of heaven's own radiance flings;
And to the Love that's real
Do angels touch their strings:—
Not to the ideal.

“Then give thy heart to Love;—
Freely give it;
And angels will approve.
Wholly give it,
If the dear God above—
The true and only Love—
Thou wouldst should receive it,
And him that gives approve,
Freely, wholly give it.”

“Give thine as thou wilt, contented idiot!” muttered Ulric through his clenched teeth, as he walked rapidly away, and in half an hour was rowing lustily out into the beautiful bay that encircled the island on which his friends were encamped.

The party he joined, if not as refined as some of the parties of our own day, was, at least, as merry as the best of them; and there was no frolic proposed for their enjoyment, that Ulric did not enter into with as much spirit as the wildest madcap of them all. They rowed and swam, ran, jumped and wrestled, sang and danced, drank and smoked, and told stories, the humor of which could but poorly atone for their want of decency and of reverence. In this manner they spent the Saturday, most of Saturday night, and the whole of the next day—Sunday though it was—without paying the slightest regard to its sacred character—until compelled by weariness to give over; and when Ulric laid himself down among his companions, for

the little time that was to intervene between the hour of rest and that which was to summon them back to town, no one seemed better disposed than he to make all he could of a few hours sleep.

At an early hour next morning the revellers left the island and returned home; but, unwilling to part company as long as there was a possibility of keeping together, many of them accompanied Ulric as far as the great gate in front of his father's house. Here they were met by an unwonted spectacle. The grounds, on which very few had ever before ventured to trespass, were now covered with people of all ages and conditions, who seemed in a wonderful state of excitement.

As soon as Ulric was recognized by those nearest the gate, a general rush was made towards him, and scores of voices shouted in his ears, one long and dismal "Oh!"

"What is the matter?" he demanded of an old negro woman, who appeared at the head of the troop.

"Ole Masser! ole Masser!"

"What of him, Neechy?"

"Dead, Masser Ully, dead!"

"Dead?"

"Dead, Masser Ully. Kill in him's bed!"

"O impossible!" exclaimed the young man, his face becoming suddenly blanched, and his whole frame quivering. "Who would have done such a thing as that?"

"Nobody know," answered the old woman, with a sorrowful shake of her head.

"I guess somebody doos know, though," said a tall, thin New England woman, with a hooked nose much used to Scotch snuff. "When the diskivery of the old man's death wor made, and the neighbors insisted that the Crowner should be fetched, or what's jist the same, Squire Van Ingen, as a matter of course, all the folks about the house had to be got together, when lo and behold! one of the slaves was a missin', a boy called Jake, that——"

"O Missis!" said old Neechy, in a deprecating tone, "don't go for to 'cuse dat boy. A poor orphant, what ha'n't got nobody to care for him, but him's poor old granny. Yawpy neber do it."

"Maybe so, maybe so," returned the woman sharply. "But, at any rate, he wa'n't forthcomin' when called for, nor a'n't yet; and more than that, a boat is gone out of the boat-house, that can't be found nowhere."

Ulric waited to hear no more; but, attended by his companions proceeded, through the crowd to the house, where, after a pretty hard struggle, he entered the room where the old man lay dead, and where the Coroner's jury was still sitting.

The contemplation of death, if not always painful, is, at least, always saddening, and the companions of Ulric gazed upon the rigid form before them with moistened eyes, and feelings very near akin to awe. But the son of the murdered man stood by the corse of his father, without exhibiting the slightest sign of emotion; yet, to one who had watched him more closely than those that were gathered about him, it might have been seen that his lips were tightly com-

pressed, and his cheek bloodless, that his brow was sternly contracted, and his eyes were wild and glassy, and that there was more of horror, and even of terror, in his face than sorrow for his great and irreparable loss.

The old man had been found dead in his bed—apparently smothered in his sleep, for, though his face was blackened and most frightfully distorted, there were no marks of violence upon him, and it was agreed by all that the dreadful deed had been committed by the negro lad who was missing, in revenge for the ill treatment he had received at the hands of his master, and the jury returned a verdict accordingly.

Carstein, unloved though he was in life, was yet honored in his death by one of the most magnificent funerals which had ever been known in that part of the world; at which refreshments—that made the house appear more like one of feasting than of mourning—were freely distributed to all who would receive them; after which twelve gray-haired men of the highest respectability, accompanied, as pall bearers, the poor remains of the late rich man to their final resting-place, in which they were laid with all possible respect. Yes, with all possible respect for the perishable body, but none for the immortal soul; for over the grave of Carstein no prayer was uttered either for the dead or the living. As he had called himself a Catholic, even while living in open contempt of all the precepts of the faith that he professed, no clergyman of another denomination felt it his duty to assist in “burying the dead,” and there was no priest of his church then living in the colony.

IV.

He is attached ;
Call him to present trial ; if he may
Find mercy in the Law, 'tis his ; if none,
Let him not seek 't of us.

KING HENRY VIII.

LOVE—not of justice, nor yet of the murdered man, but the sordid love of money—for the Governor had offered one hundred pounds reward for the apprehension of the murderer—prompted many of the idlers of the town to set off immediately in pursuit of the black boy, on whom suspicion had at first so naturally fallen, as the one who had suffered most from the evil disposition of his master, and which by his secret flight, was now turned into certainty, with the least prejudiced ; and, as stages were little known and less used, the poor fugitive, who had fled on foot, was soon overtaken by his mounted pursuers, and brought back to undergo the penalty due to his crime, for it need hardly be added, that the trial to which he was, for form' sake, subjected must end in his condemnation.

Jake, having listened with apparent apathy to the charge against him, the testimony that went to fasten the crime upon him, and the verdict of "Guilty !" which, without leaving their seats, was returned by the jury, when asked the usual question, "Why sentence of death should not be pronounced against him?"

looking confidently in the face of the judge, answered calmly and clearly,

“Cos, Masser, I no do it.”

He then, in the tone and manner of one who, satisfied with the truth of what he is going to say, believes no one can disbelieve him, proceeded to tell, in the jargon of his class, a story, which may be rendered into English as follows :

“Old Master, as everybody knows, was very cross, but crosser to me than any one else, flogging me morning, noon, and night, whether I was good or bad, so that I wished him dead a thousand times. But I did not kill him. The last time he flogged me, I said in my own mind I will run away ; and so the next night when I went to bed, I did not go to sleep as usual, but only made believe sleep, until I was sure Granny could not hear me ; when I got up and stole out of the house, and went down to the river to get a boat. The night was very dark—black as my hand—and I could hardly see the boat-house when I got to it. Just then I thought I heard the sound of oars, and I stopped to listen. It came nearer and nearer, and presently I heard the grating of a boat’s keel upon the sand, and, in a moment after, some one coming up the path from the river ; and I hardly had time to step aside, when a person passed me, and walked cautiously towards the house.

“I thought, whoever he was, he did not mean any good, so I turned and followed close upon his steps. He got to the house first, and went in at the back door. I did the same ; when, losing all sound of

him, I began to be afraid, thinking it had not been a man, but a spook, and went to hide myself in the kitchen.

“By and by, I fancied I heard something going on up stairs, in the direction of old Master’s room. First it seemed like a slight scuffle. Then there was such a noise as Granny used sometimes to make in her sleep; and finally some one came down the stairs, walked quickly, but very lightly, through the hall, and passed out at the back door. I had placed myself behind the kitchen door, which stood partly open. There was a little fire on the hearth, and, by the light it gave, I saw the face of the man as he passed the crack of the door. *It was a white man.* After he was gone, I returned to the boat-house, took a boat, and rowed over to the other shore; and, after wandering about for three days, with only some raw corn and apples to eat, I was found and brought back;—and that is all.”

There was a dead silence for several moments, which was broken by the Court asking, if he had ever seen that man before.

“Can’t say, Masser,” was the answer.

“Have you seen him since?”

“Can’t say, Masser.”

“Would you know him, if you did see him?”

“Tink so, Masser.”

“Then look around upon this crowd, and tell us if you see any one here like him.”

The boy did as he was directed; and after looking long and anxiously around, dropped his eyes to the floor, and answered,

"I no see 'em, Masser."

It is needless to add, that the story of the prisoner was regarded by all—save one—as a mere fabrication, and the Judge proceeded at once to pass upon him the sentence of the law, which takes from the Almighty the power that He alone should possess over the lives of His creatures, and the boy was given back to the charge of the jailer, followed by sobs and exclamations of pity from the numerous blacks that mingled with the crowd, and the loud cries of unrestrainable grief of his poor old grandmother.

V.

I'll have thee burned!—WINTER'S TALE.

THE sentence of the Law—the terrible sentence of death by fire!—had been passed upon the slave, and yet, after the first outburst of despairing passion, he seemed utterly unconscious of the fate that awaited him, and ate and slept as usual, until the very morning of the execution. This indifference was attributed by most to the natural stolidity of his race, and by others to the hope of pardon which he might yet entertain. Jake had always been a favorite with his young master, from a feeling of pity, perhaps, for the ill-treatment to which he saw him daily subjected, who— which was considered rather a strange proceeding on his part—had been two or three times to visit him in

and closed again upon it, like the waters of the ocean in the wake of some mighty vessel, as the procession moved slowly, and with measured tread, up the hill, until it rested on its top. Then the boy was brought forward, and forced to mount a pile of dry, resinous wood, which had been built against a stake that was driven deep into the earth, and to which he was instantly bound by chains around his body, arms and legs.

The missionary mounted the pile with him.

"Father," said Jake, his whole frame convulsed with terror, "what can this mean? They will not, will not burn me? Young master will not surely deceive poor Jake?"

"I know not that," returned the father, with a melancholy shake of his head. "But, if he should, the GREAT MASTER will not. Look then up to Him, not for deliverance from these torments, that can kill the body only, but those eternal ones in which the soul shall writhe forever. Prepare thyself for the worst."

"But must I forgive him, if he leaves me to perish?"

"Thou must, as thou hopest to be forgiven." Then placing his crucifix before the eyes of the youth, he continued: "Look upon Him, who, far more innocent than any created being, suffered a shameful and most cruel death, to redeem his fallen creatures from the power of the devil; and learn, by his example, to forgive all mankind."

"I will try—but O, 'tis very hard!" said the poor

slave, as the large tears rolled down his face, which were kindly wiped away by the hand of the pitying missionary.

All preparation being now ready, the good father was desired to descend from the pile, which, after taking a solemn leave of the condemned, and blessing the wretched boy in the name of Him whose servant he was, he did. Then the executioner approached, and thrusting his torch into the pile, set it instantly into a blaze, which, rushing fiercely up to seize upon its prey, almost smothered in its hoarse roar the wild and terrible cry of human agony that burst from the heart of its victim.

VI.

Bring flowers, fresh flowers for the bride to wear,
They were born to blush in her shining hair.
She is leaving the home of her childhood's mirth,
She hath bid farewell to her parent's hearth,
Her place is now by another's side—
Bring flowers for the locks of the fair young bride.

MRS. HEMANS.

I have dreamed a fearful dream!

KING RICHARD III.

THE body of old Carstein was hardly yet settled in its grave, and scarcely were the ashes of poor Jake rendered cold by the winds on which they had been scattered, when, greatly to the scandal of the decorous

spinsters of the town, it was noised abroad, that Ulric had become a suitor for the hand so lately promised to his father, and, what was worse, that he had actually prevailed upon its fair possessor, with the full consent of her mother—the mercenary creature, as those disinterested beings called her—to give it to him, as soon as the year of mourning should be at an end. This promise of Amélie's did not, like the first, involve any great sacrifice on her part, for, as we have seen, her heart was always his, even when compelled, as she thought, by duty to give her hand to another, and, with an assured, but quiet hope of happiness, she now looked forward to the hour which was to unite her fate indissolubly with his; and this hour was brought nearer than she at first designed, by the return of the aged missionary, who had attended the last moments of the black boy, by whom, as being of her own faith, it was the wish of Madame Montmartin the rite of matrimony should be performed.

All things being ready for the solemnization of the marriage, every part of the old house, and not only that, but every place that could afford accommodations for a night, was crowded with guests both of the town and country, for, notwithstanding the seclusion in which the elder Garstein had lived, the acquaintance of his son was very extended, and by no means confined to the wealthy and well-born, but embraced in its circle people of every class and condition in the little world in which he had moved, each of which was now fully represented at the marriage feast.

That marriage feast! Though the memory of "the oldest inhabitant" cannot reach back so far, yet the gayety and profusion by which it was marked have been carefully chronicled by tradition, and transmitted even to our own times, and, making due allowance for the amplifications of verbal history, which has passed from one female narrator to another, it may well be doubted whether any thing of the present day has even remotely approached in one at least of these particulars. In the large, old-fashioned dining-room, the commodious parlors and ample hall, ay, and even far out on the lawn, were tables, crowded almost inconveniently together, that literally groaned beneath the weight of substantial food by which they were covered, while, to wash down the good things with which, in obedience to the master of the feast, they seemed disposed to gorge themselves, liquors of every kind were passed among the guests by buckets full. Then, when the eating was over, how gloriously the night was spent, till "almost at odds with morning," in dancing, singing, and the most uproarious mirth, beneath the bright light of innumerable bonfires, that blazed in different parts of the grounds.

Of all this, however, Amélie saw and heard but little. Having retired at an early hour from the scene of confusion, to a small apartment adjoining her own chamber, she passed the evening in company with the good priest, her mother, and a few female friends, in pleasant conversation, until the proper hour for her to withdraw with her maids from the bridal party.

Ulric was obliged to remain with the guests until a much later hour, when, taking advantage of a favorable moment, he stole from the company and entered the chamber of the bride. But what is this over which he stumbles at the threshold? He stoops. It is Amélie, in her night-clothes, to all appearance dead! He snatched her up hastily, and bore her in his arms to an adjoining room where a light was burning, and found her dress spotted with blood! His alarm was terrible; and he was about to call for assistance, when he perceived signs of returning consciousness. She then opened her eyes, and, looking into the face of her husband, murmured with a sigh that seemed to shake her whole frame,

"'Twas but a dream! But O! it was most horrible!" and laying her head upon Ulric's shoulder, wept long and freely, but in silence.

"It must indeed have been a horrible dream," he said, "that could produce so terrible an effect. What could it have been?" he asked, as, having placed her in a large chair, he began to wipe the blood from her mouth, which had been hurt by the fall.

"I was lying in bed, awake, as I thought," she began with a shudder, and casting a hurried glance around the apartment, "when suddenly I saw, through the darkness, a small bright spot upon the wall opposite, that twinkled like a star in a clear frosty sky. As I looked, it grew every moment larger, until the light that was cast from it filled the entire room. Then I saw approach me a figure, clothed in black from head to foot, that, when within a few feet of me,

uncovered its face and showed me——” She trembled, and seemed unable to proceed.

“What?” asked Ulric eagerly.

“The features of your father!”

The face of the listener became livid, and his teeth chattered, and his whole frame shook like one in an ague.

“Well?”

“Though I recognized the features, they were terrible, and his eyes, that seemed like living coals, glared most horribly upon me, and I thought he was about to do me some injury, when another figure came between us, and prevented him.”

“And the other figure?” demanded Ulric, in a strangely earnest tone.

“Was that of the black boy Jake. His clothes were white, and glistened like snow in the moonlight, and round his head was a circlet that shone like burnished gold. His countenance, though melancholy, was pleasant to look upon, and, at the wave of his hand, the figure in black receded until it appeared to lose itself in the wall; and then the figure in white seemed to melt into air, and was gone, even while I looked upon it. When I found myself alone, I sprang from the bed, with the intention of leaving the room—but remember nothing more until I found myself supported by you.”

For some moments Ulric stood by the side of Amélie, apparently lost in deep and most painful thought. At length, rousing himself from his abstraction, he said with an attempt at calmness that but ill concealed the perturbation of his feelings,

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The face of the listener became livid, and his teeth chattered, and his whole frame shook like one in an ague.

“Well?”

“Though I recognized the features, they were terrible, and his eyes, that seemed like living coals, glared most horribly upon me, and I thought he was about to do me some injury, when another figure came between us, and prevented him.”

“And the other figure?” demanded Ulric, in a strangely earnest tone.

“Was that of the black boy Jake. His clothes were white, and glistened like snow in the moonlight, and round his head was a circlet that shone like burnished gold. His countenance, though melancholy, was pleasant to look upon, and, at the wave of his hand, the figure in black receded until it appeared to lose itself in the wall; and then the figure in white seemed to melt into air, and was gone, even while I looked upon it. When I found myself alone, I sprang from the bed, with the intention of leaving the room—but remember nothing more until I found myself supported by you.”

For some moments Ulric stood by the side of Amélie, apparently lost in deep and most painful thought. At length, rousing himself from his abstraction, he said with an attempt at calmness that but ill concealed the perturbation of his feelings,

"This is certainly a strange dream, dearest, but perhaps a natural one, when we consider every thing. Your position here is so different now from what you once thought it would be, that your mind could not well help turning to the past, and the events of the last few months, having been dwelt upon too seriously during your waking hours, gave, as a matter of course, a coloring to your dreams."

"But, Ulric, it was so like reality."

"No doubt, my love. My dreams are often so vivid, that I am sometimes at a loss to know whether a thing has really occurred, or whether I have dreamed it only. But the best way to avoid such dreams as yours, is neither to speak of them to others nor think of them yourself. And here let us dismiss this unpleasant one from our minds."

"I will try," said Amélie, and the subject was dropped, and seemed thenceforth to be forgotten by them both.



VII.

These are words of deeper sorrow,
Than the wail above the dead,
Both shall live, but every morrow
Wake us from a widowed bed.

BYRON.

WE have seen that Amélie, even at the time she was—in fulfilment of her duty to her mother—about to become the wife of the elder Carstein, loved with

all her heart her early schoolfellow and the friend of her childhood, and it is not to be supposed that the love, which had burned up brightly amid trials and difficulties, would be suffered to die out for want of aliment. Yet, to a superficial observer, so it would have seemed; for, even before the first year of her married life was passed, the warm confiding manner of the maiden had wholly disappeared, and in its stead was a cold reserve, when in the presence of her husband, that could only have arisen from alienated affection. Was this so? Far from it. It is not in the power of man to sound the depths of the human heart, or to read the secrets of that most inscrutable of all created things, yet, if a straining of the eye to catch a last glimpse of her husband's departing figure, a breathless listening for his returning step, an unwearying watchfulness over all his comforts, and an eager anticipation of even his slightest wish, may be regarded as so many proofs of love, the affection of Amélie was still unchanged.

But, though her affections might not be changed, her manner certainly was. There was hesitation in her speech when she spoke to Ulric, and constraint in her smile when she replied to him; and slight as this change was—a change that might have escaped all other eyes—it could not have been unheeded by the watchful eye of her mother, who, fearing it to be caused by declining health, became seriously alarmed for the life of her darling. Nor did this alarm seem ill-founded, for every day the beautiful form of Amélie lost something of the roundness of health,

and the delicate red of her cheek faded tint by tint, until the rose had fairly given place to the lily.

"Tell me, my child," said Madame Montmartin, looking anxiously through her tears into the face of her daughter, "what is the matter? That you are ill, I but too well perceive—but what do you complain of?"

"Complain of, mother?" returned Amélie, with an appearance of alarm. "I complain of nothing. I am quite well;—indeed I am."

"Amélie, you may blind me to many things, but not to your sufferings. You are ill, I know you are. This hand," continued her mother, taking one of her daughter's small thin hands into hers, "is burning hot. You must see Doctor Vermilyea. I'll have Ulric send for him at once."

"Mother," cried Amélie, drawing her hand hastily away, "you deceive yourself. I am not ill. A little tired, perhaps, from taking too much care of my baby—but not ill, and I hope you will not hint to Ulric that you think me so."

"One of two things is certain," resumed the old lady, after a pause, "you are ill or unhappy."

"*Unhappy*, mother! How could I be unhappy? Am I not possessed of everything that heart can wish? Wealth, station, and——"

"*Kindness*, Amélie?"

"Ulric could not be *unkind*, mother."

"I hope not."

"O, believe me, he is not," said the wife earnestly.

"But do not press this subject farther. Hark! Ernest is awake. Let us go to him."

Was Ulric unkind? The hope expressed by the mother, that he was not, would seem to imply some doubt of his kindness. Yet, after the earnest entreaty of her daughter, not to press the subject farther, she felt it would be indelicate, if not cruel, to follow up her inquiry, and, sighing heavily, permitted it to rest. But, as no interest can be affected, and no feelings injured by it now, not so will I; and I am sorry to have to answer the question in the affirmative. Ulric was indeed unkind, and his unkindness dated from the very first month of their marriage.

But this was not manifested in the ordinary way. There was no asperity in his tone—no fault-finding in his manner—no denial of any of those indulgences to which all women have a claim. It was simply a shutting himself up in a reserve that could not be penetrated; a silent refusal of all confidence to her who would not have hidden a thought from him; and poor Amélie was doomed to weep in secret over the conviction that she had deceived herself, in believing Ulric to have sought her from affection as single as that which she had entertained for him.

This estrangement between husband and wife became every day more apparent; and with this estrangement, there came a change in the habits of Ulric, that would of itself have been sufficient to cause unhappiness to the heart of any one who loved him. His affairs were left entirely to the management of others, while his days were passed either in bed, or

moping about in moody silence, and his nights in the frenzy of dissipation, among a set of wretched creatures, who felt themselves honored by being permitted to share the orgies of one who, by fortune and education, seemed placed so far above their sphere. But this course of life could not last. Ulric's health and mind seemed at length affected by it; and, upon his mysterious abandonment of home and friends, it was thought that, in a fit of madness or remorse, he had destroyed himself; and this opinion was strengthened by a note, which came a few days after to poor Amélie, giving a few directions for the arrangement of his affairs, and bidding to wife and child an eternal farewell.



VIII.

Fare thee well! thus disunited,
Torn from every nearer tie,
Seared in heart, and lone and plighted,
More than this I scarce can die!

BYRON.

WHEN Amélie had, in some degree, recovered from the stunning effect of the blow dealt by the hand of her husband, she went earnestly to work to execute the commands he had laid upon her, and having extended the leases of her tenants, on terms highly satisfactory to them, and given to an honest citizen the management of her other property, she bade adieu

to her adopted country, and sailed away to France with her mother and child. The health of Madame Montmartin had been failing for some time, and it was hoped by Amélie that it might be restored by a return to her native clime. But in this she was fated to a disappointment; for, a few months after their landing at Marseilles, the good old lady was gathered to those who had preceded her to the land of everlasting silence, and poor Amélie was left alone, to struggle with difficulties which every wayfarer through the wilderness of this world is doomed to encounter. Amid all these difficulties, however, the noble woman bore bravely up, for she had that to struggle for which would give strength even to the weakest. Her little boy, every day advancing in stature and comeliness, now engrossed all her attention; and she labored diligently, by strict religious culture, to eradicate from his young mind the seeds of evil inherent in his nature; and she had the happiness of living to see her efforts crowned with success.

Having faithfully discharged her duty towards her son, and seen him placed in a situation of high and holy trust—for he had devoted himself to the service of his Maker—she withdrew from the world, and united herself to a society of women, whose active benevolence has been the theme of general eulogy, even among those who are loudest in condemnation of their religious belief—the Daughters of St. Vincent of Paul—who supply to the poor orphan a mother's place, and hover like ministering angels about the couch of the unfriended dying.

A devastating, but necessary war had swept over the land, by which the property of the Carsteins passed into the hands of strangers; the old family mansion, long uninhabited, was become a haunted ruin, and their very name seemed blotted from the memory of the oldest inhabitant in the place that once had known them, when a clerical gentleman, who had lately come to reside in the town I have been speaking of, was solicited one evening, by a respectable-looking female, to visit a poor old man, who lay at her house, apparently dying of a terrible epidemic which was at that time ravaging the country.

The house to which he was taken was rather a mean one, and in an obscure street, but had about it an appearance of cleanliness and comfort not common to those of its class, and the room to which he was conducted was at the top of it. Here, on a clean straw bed, lay a shrivelled old man, whose hours of earthly suffering were drawing rapidly to a close, but whose mind seemed not yet dimmed by the shadows of death that were gathering fast around him.

The clergyman knelt by the side of the dying man to hear his confession; but instead of pouring into his ear a relation of the sins with which his conscience was burthened, he took from under his pillow a roll of paper, which he placed in the hands of the divine, who opened it and read as follows.

IX.

Many are the scourges of the sinner, but mercy shall encompass him that hopeth in the Lord. — PSALM XXXI.

“TERRIBLE to the sinner is the justice of God!—more unsparing than the tempest, more consuming than the fire! And did not His mercy interpose between the law-breaker and the law, all flesh would perish from the earth more certainly than in the days of the deluge. And O, had not that mercy pleaded in favor of him who scrawls these lines—whose right hand is crimsoned with the blood of a father, whose soul is burthened with the crime of a double murder, what would now be his condition! I look into the gulf that my own accursed deeds have opened before me, and my brain reels, the blood freezes in my veins, and I almost swoon with excess of horror! But blessed be He who is mighty to save! His arms of mercy are extended towards me, and he will bear me over the gulf in safety! But ere I speak of his mercy, let me go back to that by which his justice was provoked.

“The wrongs my father did me were bitter and manifold, and early awoke within my bosom feelings of rancorous hatred—the seeds of evil from which have been gathered in so plentiful a harvest of crime! But that which seemed to me the greatest, was taking from me her to whom—though no vows had been ex-

changed between us—I had bound myself heart and soul, and I longed, with an intense longing, to be revenged upon him for this, but without once glancing in thought towards murder. At length my plan was matured. I had engaged, with some young companions, to go on a party of pleasure a short distance from the town; and when, overcome by their excesses, they should lay them down to sleep, I would steal away from them, and return to my father's house, rob him of his hoarded gold, the only thing I believed him capable of loving, which I knew he kept concealed in his own chamber.

“With a light boat and a good pair of oars, I soon reached my home, and passed unseen, as I thought, to the old man's room. The key of his strong box, which was kept in a small closet by the side of the chimney, was in the pocket of his breeches, which he always placed under his head when he slept; and in searching for them I awoke him. He started up, and caught me with a powerful grasp by the arm. Fearing he would alarm the house, and thus expose my evil intent, I clutched him by the throat, to make him let go his hold, but he only held me the tighter, and relaxed not his grasp until he fell back a corpse! The devil that had first tempted me to commit a simple robbery, had led me on to murder, and I fancied I could hear his exulting laugh, when I now became conscious of the terrible deed my hand had committed.

“I left the house, and returned to my companions, who had not missed me; and, when I learned next

day that the murder was attributed to one of the slaves, I believed that my secret was entirely in my own keeping. In this I was mistaken. I feared, by the story of the slave at his trial, that he shared it with me; and, by a conversation I had with him after his condemnation, I was convinced of it.

“I had always liked this boy, and the nobleness he had shown, in concealing his knowledge of what I had done, endeared him to me beyond any being of his sex, and I would have saved him at any sacrifice—short of life. But both of us could not live; and although I had promised to use every effort in his favor, I suffered the law, which had condemned him, to take its course; and thus, to one deadly sin, added another as deadly.

“The maiden I had loved, and whom my father had meditated taking from me, was now free to wed as she pleased; and believing her heart always to have been mine, I sought her hand in marriage, and obtained it. She at first scrupled giving it to me, as it had been promised to my father by her mother, however, rather than herself; but this scruple was easily removed, and we were married. And then began the trials that, having destroyed the happiness of all connected with me, and passed like a searing-iron over heart and brain, drove me, at length, out into the world, a homeless, wretched wanderer.

“The thought of my fearful crimes was ever present to me—alone and in company—waking and sleeping—filling my bosom with unspeakable but unavailing anguish. But on my wedding night, the fright-

ful forms that had constantly filled my mind, assuming a real bodily presence, manifested themselves, first to my bride, and then to me. This manifestation she looked upon as a dream, or the illusion of a disordered fancy, and this belief, although I knew its falsity, I encouraged, for, without confessing my crime, how could I admit, that it was indeed the spirits of my father and the poor slave, who had visited her in the bridal chamber? Yet, with all my address, I fear she had some suspicion of the truth; for, though she never after alluded to the circumstances, I have frequently noticed, when I approached her, something like a shudder pass through her frame, as if my presence filled her with dread.

“The spirits of my victims now became my nightly companions. But while one was ever terrible and menacing, the other wore a look of mildness and entreaty, and while one seemed bent on driving me to madness or despair, the other appeared to implore me, by repentance, to seek forgiveness of my crimes. The former was the most successful. Despair took possession of my soul, and to drown the ever recurring cry of remorse, I plunged madly into every conceivable excess.

“By reversing the order of nature—turning my day into night, and my night into day—I was enabled, for a short time, to rid myself of my nocturnal visitants. Alas! it was but for a short time! The visitations, which had at first been made only under cover of the night, now became frequent even in the glare of noon, and turn where I would, the horrible form of

my murdered father was before me, and glared upon me with eyes that burned into my very soul.

“This state of existence could not be endured; and, believing that no hell could be worse than the one I was suffering upon earth, I resolved to rush into the presence of my Judge, and know the worst at once.

“For this purpose I left my house, and sought a stream that ran within a few rods of my garden wall, the spirit of my father urging me forward, and that of the slave vainly endeavoring to stay my steps. I reached the bank, and was about to take the leap into eternity, when some one caught my arm, and pulled me backward. I turned to see whence this interruption came, and beheld the features of an old missionary, who had attended my second victim to the stake, and afterwards performed for me the marriage rite.

“His features, usually so benign, were now terrible to look upon, and in a voice that filled me with fear and trembling, he exclaimed,

“‘Who art thou, O feeble worm! that bravest the vengeance of an Omnipotent God?’

“The air of dignity and the commanding tone of this weak old man completely overpowered me. I became as a child in his hands, and, yielding myself to the impulse of the moment, knelt on the grass before him, and told him all.

“Before my confession was concluded, the old man was kneeling with me, and he, who a few minutes before was ready to denounce against me the vengeance of God, was now, in a voice broken by sobs, pouring

into my ear the blessed promises of Him who purchased with his blood redemption for all mankind, not even excepting a wretch so terribly guilty as I. These words fell upon my soul like oil upon the waters, stilling the tumult within, and as the spirits flitted before me, I saw that while one wore a look of baffled hate, the other was smiling approvingly upon me.

“‘I will at once,’ said I, ‘surrender myself to justice, and expiate my crime as the law demands.’

“‘And wherefore?’ asked the missionary. ‘Will thy death give life to the departed? Nay, will it not rather brand with infamy the innocent brows of thy wife and child? If God requires thee to live, it is thy duty to bear the burden of life patiently; and, as one deed of kindness to a suffering fellow-creature, is more meritorious in His sight than a whole hecatomb of victims, thou shalt live to do good. But, as thy wife and fortune have been the reward of thy crimes, thou shalt not live in the enjoyment of them; but go abroad among strangers, and earn thy bread in the sweat of thy brow;—and thy penance shall be, to labor diligently for the happiness of others, and may God endow thee with strength so to do.’

“I obeyed. The endearments of home, and the indulgences to which I had thought myself entitled, were abandoned, and I became an outcast and a wanderer, but endeavoring, amid all my difficulties, to be in some way serviceable to my fellow-men. Still the spirits of good and evil attended me, one seeking by every means to deter me from the practices of charity,

and the other encouraging me to persevere. And, with God's help, I did persevere.

"After years of wandering among those to whom my name was unknown, I have returned to find myself forgotten in my native place. But what does that matter? If God has not forgotten me in His mercy, the forgetfulness of my fellow worms is of little importance;—better far than to be remembered as a Murderer."

The clergyman knelt again by the side of the dying man. Their conversation I cannot repeat; but it ended by the priest of the Most High imparting to the sufferer the consolations of religion. Then he prayed long and fervently by the bedside of the dying, and continued to pray long after the immortal spirit had passed from its tabernacle of clay. The clergyman was the son of Ulric and Amélie, and his prayer for the departed, although he knew it not, was poured forth for the soul of HIS FATHER.

"Mercy on me, grandpapa," exclaimed Kate, with uplifted hands and an affected shudder, "what a story you have been telling us! Really, I shall hardly venture to go to my own room o' nights after this, for fear of seeing the ghosts of that horrid old Carstein and poor Jake looking at me out of the wall."

"Yet you would have no reason to fear even so malicious a ghost as that of old Carstein," said Max

to her, in an *aside*, as the play books say, without being overheard by any one but me, “for, as Burns said of ‘Bonnie Lesley,’

‘The deil he cou’d na scaith thee,
Or aught that wad belang thee,
He’d look into thy bonnie face,
And say—*I canna wrang thee.*’”

At this she blushed and looked down, and her confusion at this pretty compliment, which from another would only have made her laugh, confirmed a suspicion I had for some time entertained, but which I mean, for the present, to keep to myself, and let my daughter go on with the story it was now her turn to tell. This she did by reading, from manuscript, the following, which, for aught she told us to the contrary, might have been communicated to her, as a “Writing Medium,” by some one “t’other side o’ Jordan.”

The Devil's Chimney.

A DOMESTIC STORY BY MRS. EGANTON.

I am a very foolish, fond old man,
And, to deal fairly,
I fear I am not in my proper mind.

KING LEAR.

I.

THE DOCTOR'S ORDER.

“You must certainly leave the city,” said the doctor. “You want rest and change of air; but, above all, you want rest.”

“But, doctor,” I asked, in the querulous tone of an invalid, “how am I to get either? I must work or starve; and what change of air can be found between this and Mrs. Mainwaring’s? ’Tis true, I can go once a week to the Battery; but what is that?”

“Nothing. You must go into the country, and,

for three months, at least, not so much as take a needle in your fingers."

I laughed.

"You need not laugh," said the doctor, "but must follow my directions to the very letter."

"But how is it to be done?"

"I will tell you. I have a friend, or rather an acquaintance, living at Stony Bottom, about forty miles up the river, a countryman of our own, by the by, and of your way of thinking, I believe, in matters of religion, who has lately had the fortune—good or bad—to lose his wife. Don't turn up your lip. I didn't mean that you should go and take the place of the dead Mrs. Muckridge. I met him last week at the Bear Market, and he expressed a strong desire that I would send him some one whom I could recommend, to take charge of a little girl he has, who is in a fair way of being spoiled by the people he has about him. Now, you are just the kind of person he wants; and, as I'm sure the place will suit you, for a few months, at any rate, I will write to Muckridge at once, and let him know you will take it." And, before I had time to put in one word of remonstrance, the doctor was gone.

For a proper understanding of the preceding conversation, it is necessary I should enter, though briefly, into the history of the writer of these pages.

My father was an Irish farmer, who cultivated, as a tenant, a small portion of the land of which his fathers had been once possessed;—the only subject on which I ever knew him to dwell with any bitterness.

He was a man of considerable education for that time and country, and, having no son to succeed to the knowledge he had gathered, took a good deal of pains in imparting a portion of it to me, which served to while away the long winter evenings, that few of his neighbors knew how to employ half so well. Of my mother, who died when I was very young, I have no distinct recollection, although I sometimes fancy, even now, that I see a gentle face looking kindly upon me, which must resemble hers. Of course this is but fancy.

We came to America—that is, my father and I—when I was about fifteen, bringing with us the kind wishes of many friends—but very little money, and, when, a few months after, I was left an orphan, I was glad to find a home with a poor neighbor, who, like ourselves, had come from the North of Ireland not long before, who charitably gave me the shelter of her roof, and a full share of the coarse food which her labor, as a woman of all work, enabled her to procure. But, unwilling to remain long a burthen upon one who seemed almost borne to earth by the weight of her own cares, I apprenticed myself to a very worthy woman—the Mrs. Mainwaring already mentioned—who, in return for a year and a half's servitude, taught me her own trade of dressmaking, by which I was able, not only to support myself, but to repay, in some measure, the kindness I had received at the hands of good old Oonah Gillespie.

But—not to speak it profanely—though “the spirit was willing, the flesh was weak.” My constitution,

which Nature had intended to be of the robust kind, was greatly, if not radically, injured by too early and too close an application to my business, and now, at the age of twenty-five, I was supposed, by all who took any interest in my welfare, to be far gone in consumption. Then it was that, for the first time in my life, I consented to listen to the advice of a physician, who, providentially, was no other than my celebrated countryman, the kind-hearted and highly-gifted Dr. Morton; and, in accordance with his advice, was obliged to give up all my old habits and old haunts, and condemn myself to three months' vegetation in one of the dullest spots on the face of the earth, for such, indeed, at that time, was the village of Stony Bottom, now flourishing under a far more classic name.

In about a fortnight—people did not communicate by lightning then—the Doctor received an answer to his missive, and hastened to inform me, that his application to his friend Muckridge had been most favorably received, and that the situation of governess, maid, or nurse, whichever I was pleased to consider it, to Miss Jerusha Ann Muckridge, a child of eight or nine, was ready for my acceptance. I accepted it, of course; for, as the Doctor took care to tell me, I must choose between that and death, I preferred living—even in Stony Bottom—to dying in New York, although broken in health and spirits, and destitute alike of friends and of home. Yet I do wrong to say I was destitute alike of friends and of home. Old Oonah was still living; and in her and her true-

hearted daughter Rose—at this time comfortably married—I had ever had friends tried and true, and, as long as they had a shelter for themselves, was always sure of a home. But I had no *natural* claim to their affection, and, amid all their kindnesses, was often so ungrateful as to weep over my want of kindred, and sigh for the comforts of my own fireside.

“Be it ever so humble, there’s no place like *home* !”

The week after my decision was made, Mr. Muckridge came in person to be my escort to Stony Bottom; and well was it for the permanency of my resolution that my word was passed before I met my future employer, or I am sadly afraid I should not have adhered to it, for, though there was a certain kind of authority in his face, it was not that kind of authority which old Kent would have liked to call “Master.” It was the attempt at authority without the dignity to enforce it; that assumption of superiority which one so often sees in those who have become rich by some fortuitous circumstance, rather than by the exercise of any commendable talent, and which the humblest among us are so unwilling to acknowledge. But, properly to understand the character of this man, it is necessary that I should give you a few particulars of his history, with which, however, I did not become acquainted until long afterward.

II.

A LOVER OF LIBERTY.

MICKEY MUCKRIDGE was, both by nature and education, an ardent lover of liberty, being the son and pupil of a woman who, in carrying out her ideas of "the largest liberty," had early abandoned the "bed and board"—*videlicet*, the wisp of straw and kish of potatoes—of her liege lord, to become the companion of a peripatetic philosopher—in other words, a travelling tinker—known throughout the length and breadth of his native land, by the *soubriquet* of "Burn the Gully;" and this love of liberty manifested itself in my friend Mickey at a very early age.

It had been the wish of Nanny Sheehan, as his mother now chose to be called, that her son should acquire a sufficient knowledge of the "art and mystery" of soldering pots and pans, to become successor to her adopted husband, when it should please the Fates to snap the slender thread by which they were bound together. But "Burn the Gully" was of rather an arbitrary disposition, and fond at times of playing the master. This was something to which Mickey was by no means disposed to submit; so giving "leg bail" for his next appearance in the court of this self-elected judge—in his particular case—he quietly withdrew one night from the family circle,

and the next that was heard of him was as one of a regiment of Foot *en route* for the Peninsula.

The discipline of an army is rather favorable than otherwise to the love of liberty, notwithstanding the abject slavery to which soldiers—those human automata—are everywhere reduced; and this feeling often prompted the representative of the Muckridges of Ballyslough to retire from the field of glory, and leave to other hands the gathering of the laurels that—bedewed as they were with blood and tears—were destined for his own brows. For this, however, there was then no opportunity; and he continued to perform with the regularity of a machine the duties of his station for several years. At the end of this time, finding himself placed on the narrow line that divides the colonial territories of the British Sovereign in America from the only free country under the sun—as all newspapers and Fourth of July orators will assure you—he took advantage of his position, and sought a sure refuge from the oppression of kings—and drill serjeants—beneath the “Star-spangled Banner,” heaven bless it!

“And long may it wave
O’er the land of the free and the home of the brave.”

The unwillingness of soldiers to work is proverbial, most of them preferring to sell their shirts—when they have any—to submitting to anything like manual labor. Mickey Muckridge was by no means an exception to the rule respecting his brethren. But, though unwilling to use his hands, he was a proficient

at head-work, of which he gave a proof in a very little while after coming into the "States." Standing one day in the door of a kind of public house—half tavern, half grocery—in a village of half a dozen dwellings, supporting the jamb with his shoulder, he was roused from a reverie of no very pleasing nature—for he had but one six-cent "shinplaster" in his pocket, without even the shadow of one in perspective—by a rather unusual circumstance. A gaudily-attired young woman, but of comely appearance, though, as Mickey might have thought, a little too much like a Mullingar heifer, being "beef to the heels," who was mincingly crossing the road, was met midway by a hog that had just been guilty of a petit larceny, having stolen from a *truck* peddler a fine head of cabbage, with which he was making off, when, without saying, "By your leave," the creature took the fair pedestrian upon his back, and bore her away in gallant style, to the infinite delight of a crowd of boys, just let loose from school, and the unspeakable dismay of the rider, who, to secure herself in her seat, had laid tight hold of the animal's tail.

It was not to be expected that a soldier and an Irishman could see a being of the gentler sex in so distressing a situation, without flying to her aid. Mickey at once started in pursuit, undaunted by the volleys of laughter that greeted him on every side, and soon overtook, and finally passed the beast; but in his endeavor to "head him off," he made him turn so suddenly as to unseat the fair rider as unceremoniously as he had taken her up, and to throw her,

with considerable violence, into the midst of a parcel of ducks, that were enjoying themselves in a pond by the wayside. With as much respect as a knight-errant of old would have shown to a princess in distress, Mickey lifted the lady out of the mud, and conducted her to a wagon, that was in waiting for her in front of the public house, whence he had issued to her assistance, and consigned her to the care of a respectable old man who proved to be her father.

By this circumstance our friend made the acquaintance of Job Conklin and his daughter Jerusha, and upon entering into the service of the former, as a laborer on his farm, he, to use an Irish phrase, "turned out the burnt side of his shin," which, in common language, means that he put his best foot foremost, and made himself so agreeable to the latter, that with very little persuasion, she was prevailed upon to unite her fate with his in holy wedlock—a step which Mickey was induced to take, though at the sacrifice of a portion of his darling liberty, by the prospect of the great consequence he was likely to acquire as successor to worthy old Job.

III.

HEAD WORK.

MICKEY MUCKRIDGE did become successor to old Job, and at a much earlier period than any one but

himself could have anticipated, for he became possessor of the farm even in the life-time of the former owner.

Conklin was an old man at the time of his daughter's marriage, and did not seem likely to stand long between his son-in-law and the succession. But Mickey was not one to wait patiently for a "dead man's shoes," when he could get a pair of his own, so, having recourse to his head work again, he persuaded the old man that he ought not to trouble himself longer with the care of the farm, which should be given up to one of fewer years and fresher energies, and proposed to relieve him at once of a burthen he was no longer able to sustain. To this proposal the simple old soul, who believed it to proceed from the most disinterested affection on the part of his son-in-law, cheerfully acceded, and not only gave up the management of the farm to Mickey, but was foolish enough to execute a Deed of Gift in his favor, by which that worthy, as soon as he could exercise the rights of citizenship, was able to claim a mastery of the soil.

Having, by his head work, obtained a wife and farm, he now continued it for the increase of his means. With very few exceptions, the inhabitants of the district in which he lived, were as poor and worthless a race of mortals as can be found in any portion of the broad lands of America. Scarcely one degree above the savage in civilization, and actually far below him in moral worth, the dwellers in the mountainous country above Stony Bottom were despised, yet feared,

by all who were brought in contact with them;—despised for their wilful ignorance of the amenities of life, and feared for their reckless disregard of the rights of others. Yet these were the beings who were to be made subservient to the interests of this man, who, though Irish by birth, partook largely of the *canniness* of the Scotch, from whom, as his name would imply, he was descended.

The occupation of these people, besides raising a little corn and a few vegetables, was making baskets, after the fashion of the degenerate Indians scattered among them, and carrying them to the nearest village, where they exchanged them for pork and rum, and other necessaries of artificial life, but without receiving anything like an equivalent for their goods. Muckridge saw the advantage to be derived from trade of this kind, and determined to secure it for himself. For this purpose, having raised some money by a mortgage on his farm, he opened a Variety Store, such as one sees occasionally at a distance from any town, where articles of common use, but of the worst quality, are given in barter for other articles that, at a trifling expense, can be sent to market and turned at once into cash at a very great profit; and such were the baskets which were to be obtained of the half-savage and wholly necessitous mountaineers.

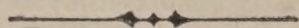
In a very few years Mickey Muckridge rose to be a man of importance in his humble sphere—for such the possessor of wealth, no matter how obtained, can seldom fail to become—and wealth had flowed in upon him in so steady a stream, that he was now,

compared to even the most comfortable of his neighbors, certainly rich; and some of the wiseacres of the town, wishing to pay court to the man of substance, began to talk of him for the Legislature, "for which," as one of his countrymen wrote to his father in Ireland, "ungodly mean men are taken in this country." But, flattering as this suggestion was to his pride, his native prudence would not permit it to be carried into effect. He knew that, although votes are not to be bought, he would be expected to "stand treat" to every ragamuffin who possessed the right of suffrage, and every ragamuffin does possess that right in York State, and he thought justly, that the honor of a seat in the Legislature would be dearly purchased by the loss of all the liquor in his store. So, on the plea of certain engagements, which he was bound in honor to fulfil, he very wisely begged to decline their offer. His plea was accepted, of course, but his motive was perfectly understood, and was thus resented by one of his would-be constituents, on occasion of a trifling illness with which he was soon after attacked.

When news to the sulphurous regions were brought,
That Mickey, the Miser, was sick beyond cure,
"O come," cried some imps, as the rumor they caught,
"Let us fly up to earth, of the prize to make sure."
"Don't hurry yourselves," coolly answered Old Nick,
As regaling himself he sat over a bone.
"Let him grub yet awhile;—there's no danger of Mick.
He will come down himself if you let him alone."

But the contempt of his neighbors had no evil effect upon the prosperity of this favorite of Fortune, nor

even the afflictions from which he was no more exempt than the rest of mankind; for the death of his wife—whom he honorably buried under an apple-tree of his own orchard—by putting him in possession of a few hundreds, which she had scraped together, by the sale of her soft soap and apple-butter, and a few other articles of domestic manufacture, enabled him to take advantage of the markets, and buy up many things cheap that he afterwards sold at an enormous profit.



IV.

THE MUCKRIDGE MÉNAGE.

I HAVE always been fond of children, and when I first heard of the motherless Jerusha Ann, I thought that, however unpleasant my new situation might be in other respects, the love of this child, which I was quite sure to win, would make it at least endurable; and I amused myself, in my upward passage, in picturing to my mind the ingenuous and innocent face that was to look up to me on my arrival. But, like most of my ideal limnings, the picture would not bear too close a scrutiny. The face was turned up to me on my arrival, it is true, but, for the ingenuousness and innocence I had expected, I met a face, though not positively ugly, the natural stupidity of which was relieved only by a look of acquired cunning, and to my

first words of kindness, her reply was that, if I didn't look out she would slap my face.

"Get out of that with you!" exclaimed Muckridge, giving the child a smart box on the ear; who thereupon set up a loud cry, and ran and hid herself behind a strapping country girl, who had stood in the middle of the floor, with a dishcloth in her hand, staring at me openmouthed from the time I entered.

"Let the gal alone, do," said the "help," turning upon her "boss" a countenance not "in sorrow" but "in anger;" "you'm always a hurtin' on her, so you be."

"Let her behave herself then before folks," was the sharp reply of Muckridge. "The child would be good enough," he continued, in an apologetic tone and turning to me, "if it warn't for the people I've about me, who do nothing but humor her from morning till night. Take her out of this," again addressing the "help," "and stop her bawling, or I'll ram my hat down her throat."

The child was taken away by the indignant "help," whose name I learned was Keziah, or as she was called Kezi, with the accent on the last syllable, who muttered as she went something that did not seem very complimentary to "city ladies."

After a few hours, however, Kezi resigned to me the care of the little girl, whom I took all possible means to conciliate, and had the pleasure to perceive, before bed-time, that my efforts were likely to be successful. But when that time came, all I had done seemed to have been thrown away. Jerusha Ann had

always been allowed by Kezi to sit up as long as she pleased, and then lie down for a nap on a lounge in the kitchen, from which she was carried to bed. To this I at once objected, and insisted upon her going to bed precisely at eight o'clock. She rebelled, as a matter of course, and appealed to Kezi to aid her in opposing my authority; but, as my resolution was more than a match for the obstinacy of both, I soon obtained a victory, and bore her off in triumph, regardless of the kickings and strugglings she kept up, until I reached the chamber we were to share together.

From my heart I pitied this little creature, whose nature, however good it might originally have been, had been sadly perverted by the injudicious treatment to which she had been exposed; and, instead of sitting down to scold, as I felt most strongly inclined, for I was indeed sadly vexed, I stood her at my knee, while I assisted her to undress, for she was almost as helpless as an infant, and spoke to her calmly and kindly, until the tempest of passion was hushed into a tolerable calm, that was only now and then broken by a sob.

When properly prepared for the night, she was about to throw herself into bed, without uttering anything like a prayer.

"My dear," said I, "have you not forgotten something?"

"No," she answered poutingly.

"Have not you forgotten your prayers?"

"No. I don't say none."

"Have you never been taught?"

"Yes, Kezi teached me one."

"Then let me hear you say it," I said, motioning her to kneel.

"Well," said she, getting into bed, "I'll say it here :

'Here I lay me down to sleep,
All *quirled* in a heap ;
If I die before I wake,
Pray the Lord to lay me straight.'

I was in no mirthful mood at the moment, but for the life of me could not restrain the impulse to laughter which this ludicrous prayer provoked, and my outburst of merriment had so good an effect upon my charge that her good humor returned, and she fell asleep with a smile upon her features that rendered them almost pretty.

The family of Muckridge, at this time, consisted of the "boss;" his daughter, Jerusha Ann; Keziah Potter, who though only a servant, generally bossed the boss; Barney Sheehan, the half-brother of Muckridge, and Florence Nagle, a lad of eighteen, who had principal charge of the store, though this was frequently disputed with him by Barney, who had a good deal of "Burn the Gully" in him, and loved to play the master, particularly when he had one apparently so gentle as Florence Nagle to deal with. But, as Barney and Florence are both likely to make some figure in the following history, it is necessary to devote a few words to the description of them. And first of the first.

Barney Sheehan was the son of Dennis Sheehan, commonly called "Burn the Gully," and Nanny Muckridge, who, in compliment to the man she had adopted for her husband, assumed the name of Nanny Sheehan. From the former he inherited his lankiness of person and domineering temper, and from the latter a strut, peculiar to persons who feel they have no right to the respect they are determined to exact, and the disposition to sneer at everybody who, by fortune or character, was placed above him. He had little education. This was not to be wondered at, when one considers the wandering habits of his parents; but the little he had he made the most of, and what he wanted in real knowledge, he made up in pretension, so that he passed in his little world for a man of vast acquirements. He had come to this country some years before, upon the death of his respectable parents, for the purpose of pushing his fortune, when the Providence that watches over the "lame and the lazy," conducted him to the neighborhood of his half-brother, who, rather unwillingly it must be confessed, acknowledged the relationship, and brought him into his family, and, finally, gave him a certain control in the management of the farm, in which he succeeded in making enemies of all who were employed under him. His age was now about twenty-eight, and as it could hardly be expected that "a fool of his age would make a wise man," I found Barney Sheehan, at the end of our acquaintance, much the same being that he was at the beginning.

Florence Nagle was in everything unlike Barney.

He was, as I have said, a lad of eighteen, so gentle as to appear to the common observer deficient in manliness of character, and more diffident than the generality of girls at his age. But, beneath that gentle exterior, was concealed an ardent and unyielding spirit, and his shyness hid, from the common observer only, the genius that lit up his thin pale features, and flashed from his dark deep-set eyes, when anything was said in his presence to startle into wakefulness the sleeping energies within him. His education had been closely attended to, and he would have graduated at old Columbia, much before the usual time, had not the death of his parents, which happened about six months before, frustrated their plans for his advancement in life; when, thrown upon his own resources, he was glad to accept a paltry clerkship in a country store, as the only present means afforded him of earning his bread. But reverse of fortune, though it must dampen, could not destroy the hopeful spirit of the lad, and his studies, though greatly interrupted, were still pursued, with an eagerness that could not fail of success.

The orphan state and gentle disposition of this youth interested me in his favor, and, as the difference in our ages would prevent any suspicion of my motives, I did not hesitate to show the interest I felt upon every necessary occasion, and often jeopardized the favorable opinion, which I soon saw was entertained for me by Barney, in taking the part of the weak against the strong. This, in his isolated condition—with no relations near, and cut off from all intercourse

with his early associates—was enough to secure the friendship of one of his warm and grateful nature, and an intimacy sprang up between us, which neither the changes of time nor of circumstance have been able to impair.

V.

A BUDDING POET.

AMONG the many inducements held out to me by Muckridge, in favor of accepting the new home he offered me, was one that outweighed them all; and this was, that every mother's *son* in his family, *except Kezi*, was of my own way of thinking in religion. This, though perhaps an innocent, was, not the less, a grievous deception, for Mickey Muckridge and his half-brother, though they might have been, and no doubt were, baptized in the Church of which they called themselves members, might as well have been born Mahometans, for any effect their profession had upon their practice. Jerusha Ann, though now about nine years old, would have been puzzled to answer the first question in the catechism, and had never been taught even the Lord's Prayer, that embodiment in words of Christian love, humility and trust, and I could only prevail upon her to learn something like it, by the promise of a large doll, when I should go to town, for committing to memory a paraphrase, the hint for which I took from Kezi's prayer.

Florence Nagle, with much natural piety, like all highly imaginative beings, had little that was practical, and while he would recite with enthusiasm Pope's Universal Prayer, sadly neglected, I am afraid, the morning and evening sacrifice he had been taught to offer up by his mother, whose memory he still so fondly cherished; and the day that, by Christians, is set apart for the special service of God, was devoted by him to the study of his favorite authors, the heathen writers of Greece and Rome, with whose best passages he was better acquainted than with the Sermon on the Mount.

My first Sunday in Stony Bottom was a heavy one; for, as there was then no Catholic place of worship within many miles, I was obliged to spend it in the solitude of my own room, to avoid the sights and sounds that were constantly bringing down the thoughts on Heaven to the things of this earth. There was the constant tramp of feet in the road, of sellers and buyers, to and from the store, for, though Muckridge had the grace to close the door and windows in front, he took good care to keep a door open in the rear, for the accommodation of his friends, on whom he waited in person, allowing Florence to wander off into the woods with his book, and Barney, whose conscience would not permit him to work, to spend the day in sleep. There was the shrill voice of Kezi, singing a Camp Meeting hymn, to the accompaniment of her dasher, as she was churning in the kitchen, although she had been over and over again assured by a neighbor, that singing always prevented

the coming of the butter, and to all those sounds were added the quacking of ducks, the cackling of geese, the gabbling of a turkey cock, and the kitkittooting of hens, among which Jerusha Ann, for the want of other amusement, was playing the mischief. Of these annoyances, however, although I never became reconciled to them, I grew more tolerant, and managed to read my prayer-book without being seriously interrupted by them. But my great resource against them, was, when the weather would permit, to take refuge in the woods and fields, with my Thomas a Kempis, or St. Francis de Sales, and, beneath the blue vault of the great Temple of Nature, lift my heart in praise or supplication to Him who looks more to the motive than to the manner of our worship.

In one of these retreats I encountered Florence, who was so intent upon his book, that he was not aware of my presence until I called him by name.

"Where are you now?" I asked, laughing, as he started and looked up. "In Greece or Rome?"

"Neither," he answered, in his own earnest manner. "I have been all the morning in the green isle of my fathers; for, as I suppose you know, though I am an American by birth, for which I am grateful to Heaven, the hot blood of the Celt, tempered a little, perhaps, by the cooler blood of the Saxon, flows in my veins."

"No one would doubt it, Florence," I said, "who had heard that speech."

"It is a speech I would hardly be willing to make before any one," he replied, in a tone of slight reproach,

"but you, Ellen, for you alone, of all the people I meet with here, have seemed to understand me."

"I did not mean to hurt you, Florence, by my silly banter, for I understand you too well to wish to trifle with you. But what has happened this morning, to make you leave your favorite climes for the green isle of your fathers, and my own dear, but most unhappy country."

"I have been reading this most delightful book," he answered, holding up the "Wild Irish Girl" of Miss Owenson, "and my heart has burned within me at the recollection, which it has awakened, of the long and bitter wrongs of poor down-trodden Erin, as I have heard them related by my father, who was one of those who so bravely, but unsuccessfully, struggled for the restoration of her rights, in the disastrous year of NINETY-EIGHT. My poor father!" continued the boy, and the unshed tears glistened in his dark eyes, "he loved his country with all the ardor of a patriot and the reverence of a son, and I should blush for myself, if, were it only for his sake, I did not love her too."

In the dilated form and animated countenance of the youth, few would have recognized the shy and taciturn clerk of Mickey Muckridge.

"I have often wished," he resumed, after a short silence, "that I were a great and powerful man, able to raise and command an army capable of contending successfully with the might of England, how gladly would I then make one grand effort, for the deliverance of poor Ireland from the thrall of the stranger.

Or that Heaven would endow me with eloquence, to rouse in her favor the sympathies of the heart of Europe; or give me the wonderful power of the poet, that I might 'sing a song at least,' as Burns says, which should make her wrongs known throughout the world. You smile, Ellen, and think me, no doubt, a very silly boy; but these are really my wishes."

"If I smiled, Florence," I replied, "it was not in derision, but with pleasure, for I am not old enough yet to regard with scorn or coldness the enthusiasm of the young; and, woman as I am, I can fully sympathize with you in every wish you have uttered. But they are vain wishes."

"True, true, Ellen. I can never be a great general, I know; nor orator,—that my unfortunate sheepishness will forever prevent; nor yet a poet, although I do now and then commit the 'sin of rhyme,' whenever I become strongly excited by any subject."

"A great general you will never be, I hope. But a great orator you can and may be, and, with proper efforts, no doubt will. To be a poet, however, depends not altogether upon yourself. The inspiration, to be of the right sort, must come from above, and you have but to put yourself, by proper study, in a condition to correspond with it. But come, I am something of a judge, and I would like to see a sample of your 'rhyming ware.'"

This request, though it came from one whose critical skill might very well be questioned, was evidently highly gratifying to the authorling, who, from a fly-leaf of the book in his hand, read, with a blushing

cheek, and in a fluttered manner, some lines, which he had there written in pencil:

While bestowing upon his verses the expected praise, I was interrupted by Florence, exclaiming,

“What a beautiful child!”

I looked towards an orchard, that covered several acres of the hill side on which we were standing, and saw one of the prettiest little creatures I had ever beheld;—a girl of five or six summers, that might have served as a model to painter or sculptor, for a sylph or a fay. Her tiny form had a symmetry not often found in children of her age; her lovely little face, rosy with health and bright with the merriment of her innocent young heart, as seen amid the flaxen curls that clustered around it, was “beautiful exceedingly,” and her laugh—the sweet and happy laugh of childhood—could not fail to awaken emotions of joy in the coldest heart, and filled mine with a pleasure not to be expressed. She was attended by a woman of perhaps fifty, of rather staid demeanor, and dressed with quaker-like precision, in a dark silk, book-muslin kerchief, and a cap of the same material, with a closely crimped border, with whom she was playing all sorts of pranks, much more to the amusement, however, than to the annoyance of her companion.

“She is indeed,” said I, “a beautiful child. Who’s is she?”

“Colonel Remsen’s, whose house you may see up yonder, through the trees. He is the great man of these parts;—compared to the people of Stony Bottom, a whale among minnows. She is his only child.”

"He is rich, of course?"

"He is said to be immensely so."

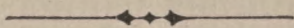
"And yet, in my opinion, his greatest wealth is in this little child. You have seen her before;—what do they call her?"

"Winona."

"Winona, Winona," I repeated. "'Tis a pretty name, but one that I have never heard before."

"'Tis an Indian name, I believe, and means the First-born. Pretty both, the name and the signification, are they not?"

"Very pretty," I answered, and we returned to the house together.



VI.

ILL REQUITED LOVE.

MY new home, which had never been particularly pleasant to me, was every day becoming less tolerable, and, although there was a full month of the time named by Dr. Morton for my residence in the country unexpired, I determined to leave it, to save myself from the love of one and the insolence of another of the family—Barney and Kezi—from whom, for the last few weeks, I had suffered incessant persecution.

Vanity, it is said, is pardonable in women; and I might, therefore, be excused, if I confessed to a weakness from which few of my sex are exempt. But, in

honest truth, I never, even in my girlish days, had the vanity to think myself handsome; and, now, when my cheek had lost the color and the fullness of health, my glass assured me I had scarce a pretension even to prettiness left. But every eye forms its own beauty; and the eyes of Barney had found, or rather created, beauties in me of which I had never dreamed, and he never suffered an opportunity for telling me so to pass unimproved. Admiration is certainly no crime, and admiration from those we love, or respect, even when we feel ourselves not wholly deserving of it, is pleasant enough, to say the least of it; but when it comes from one we neither love nor respect, it is incapable of producing any feeling but that of disgust. This at least was the effect of Barney's unmeaning praises upon me, and I turned from them at last with positive loathing.

"Ellen," said he one evening, looking in my face with the piteous expression of a dying calf, "why won't you hear me? You know I love you. How is it possible, with that sweet face every day before me, I could do otherwise? Then why won't you have me? Maybe you think I couldn't make you a living? But there you're mistaken. Mickey has promised me an interest in the farm whenever I choose to marry;—and I choose to marry now, if you will only have me. Now be a kind creature, and say 'Yes' to me at once."

"It is not my wish," I answered gravely, "to say anything unpleasant; but 'tis time we understood each other, since it seems we have not yet done so;

not, however, through any fault of mine. I ought, perhaps, to be grateful for the preference you have shown me;—but, as I cannot honestly say that I am, I will not pretend any such thing, particularly as that preference is founded upon certain charms with which I know myself not to be endowed. That you may make some woman a good husband, I am willing to believe. But not me. I do not think I shall ever marry. If I should, however, my husband must be one who shall possess my entire love and respect, and——”

“I do neither.”

“You are perfectly right.”

This was not kind, I admit. But what was I to do? The fellow had for weeks annoyed me with the same dull tale, and, as gentle means had failed to silence him, I had no alternative left but harshness, and the effect was for that time just what I desired.

But Kezi was not so easily silenced. The dislike with which she had at first regarded me, as an intruder into the family, and usurper of her rights, hardened at last into positive hatred, which no attempts at conciliation on my part could soften; and in my management of Jerusha Ann, she thwarted me at every point. This I would not have cared for, if her conduct had not received the tacit approval of her employer. How obtained I knew not, but this girl possessed a certain influence over Muckridge, which she never scrupled to exercise, when her own interests were to be served, or her natural malevolence to be gratified by it; and that influence was now so

frequently used to my annoyance, that I made up my mind to remove myself from it, and accordingly apprised the Boss of my intention to return to town.

"I am sorry to hear that," said he, trying to look a concern which he did not feel. "I was in hopes we should be able to keep you with us altogether. But, if you will go, I must try and reconcile myself to the disappointment. I hope somebody I needn't name may do as much," and he looked at me so knowingly, that I was sure Barney had let him into the secret of his passion, and the indignant blood burned in my cheeks at the thought.

This was said in the store, whither I had followed him one morning after breakfast, and found him busy among his customers, dealing out rum and molasses, soap and tobacco, black tea and rusty pork. I was about to make a rather tart reply, when I was prevented by some one exclaiming,

"Stand aside, niggers, and gib a white man a chance," and looking towards the door, my eyes fell upon the upturned face of a short, bandy-legged old negro, whose dark visage shone like a black bottle, under the combined influence of good humor and a hot sun, although the autumn was pretty far advanced.

"Good morning, mas'er," he continued, pulling down his head by a thin lock of grizzled wool, and drawing back his right foot with a sharp scrape on the sanded floor.

"O, good morning, good morning, Great Agamemnon," said Muckridge. "What is the news with you?"

"O, noting in general, and ebery ting in petiklar," returned the Great Agamemnon, with an uproarious laugh. "I only jist want you to step to de door. Dar is a lady dar what wants for to speak to you."

"Certainly, certainly, by all manner of means," said the obsequious Muckridge, stepping with alacrity from behind the counter, and jostling with very little ceremony all who stood in his way, as he followed the old negro out.

At scarce three paces from the door stood a handsome barouche and pair of coal-black horses, and in the barouche were seated a lady, who though passed the season of youth, was eminently beautiful, and a little girl, in whom I at once recognized the merry little maiden I had seen playing in the orchard a little more than a week before.

"Miss Remsen," exclaimed Mickey, with evident delight, bowing very low, and smiling all over his face, "I am most happy to see you once more in Stony Bottom. In what can I serve you?"

"I am sadly in want of an additional help in my family," answered the lady, "and have come to see if you can assist me in my search, for I find it almost impossible, in this part of the world, to get any one for love or money," and the lady spoke in a tone of great dissatisfaction.

"Well, I am very happy to say that I think I can name a person will suit you exactly. There's a young woman here from the city, who came up to take charge of my Jerusha Ann; but, somehow, the place don't suit her, and she has just given me notice that

she wishes to leave. She's a very good girl, is Ellen O'Donnell, and very capable, too; though," he added, sinking his voice, "a little too high, maybe, in her notions; but, for all that, I think she'll suit you very well."

"I'll see her, if you please," said Mrs. Remsen, "though, I must confess, I have no great fancy for persons of her class with those high notions."

Mickey came bustling back to tell me what I already knew, and I accompanied him out to the carriage, where, notwithstanding the lady's contempt for persons of my class with high notions, I was most graciously received. The services required by Mrs. Remsen of the "additional help," were not great, and, as I was still unwilling to return to the drudgery of dress-making, I readily closed with her terms, and agreed to enter upon the duties of my place the next day, when Agamemnon was to come to take me and my luggage up to the great house.

While we were talking, Jerusha Ann, attracted probably by the novelty of a barouche in front of her father's store, came out of the house, and, getting as close to me as possible, looked up at the strangers with wonder and admiration. In a few minutes she attracted the notice of Winona, who, stooping over the side of the carriage, said,

"How de do, little girl? Have you got a doll?"

"I ha'n't got one yet," answered Jerusha Ann, "but I'm goin' to have one, when Ellen goes to York."

"O, I've got the sweetest doll you ever saw. She

can open and shut her eyes, and almost talk. Her name is Julie. You must ask your mamma to bring you up to see her."

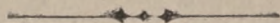
"I ha'n't got no mammy since my mammy died, only Kezi."

"Poor little girl! It must be very hard not to have a mamma. I love my Julie very much, but I wouldn't give my mamma for twenty Julies."

The earnest manner of the child seemed to touch a tender chord in the heart of the mother, who, drawing the little darling closer to her, said,

"And mamma would not give her Nony for all the world."

I felt then that service in a family presided over by one of Mrs. Remsen's affectionate nature could not be a very great evil.



VII.

OLD AFRICA.

THE appointed time brought Agamemnon for me and my luggage, neither of which was very heavy, and I bade farewell to my late acquaintances with no very sorrowful feelings on either side, except Florence Nagle, whom I loved for his gentle disposition, and pitied right heartily for his isolated state, placed as he was among people who would never appreciate, because they could not understand him.

"You must come and see me, Florence," said I, on shaking hands with him.

"That will I gladly, Ellen," he answered warmly, "the first and every opportunity."

"And mayn't I come, too?" asked Barney. I pretended not to hear him, and walked towards the door, accompanied by Kezi's valedictory of "Good riddance to bad rubbish."

"O! Ellen, Ellen," shouted Jerusha Ann, running out after me, "mayn't I come up and see that pretty little lady's doll?"

I hesitated. I did not wish to have anything more to do with these people; and yet it must seem ungracious to refuse the child so simple a request; and stooping down to kiss her for good-bye, I said,

"Yes, you can come with Florence."

What mighty consequences depend at times upon our smallest actions. By this permission I opened the door of Col. Remsen's hospitable home to one unworthy of the kindness she there received.

"Now," said Agamemnon, when, by the assistance of Muckridge, who was fond of showing his gallantry, I was fairly seated in the wagon, "when you'm ready, Miss, whistle." This I did, greatly to the delight of the old negro, who thereupon set up a tremendous "Yah! yah! yah!" and, giving a crack of his whip, away we went at a spanking rate, the tongue of Agamemnon keeping pace with the speed of his horses, now in addressing them, and now in an odd verse of a song.

"Go it, Beauty! Dash along, Darling! Dat's it!" he exclaimed.

“Lubly maid, o’ sooty dye,
 Woolly head an’ milky eye,
 If you come an’ lib wid me,
 Happy shall dis nigger be.
 Ho! ho! win’ blow!
 Who see corn grow?”

“Look out dar, Beauty! De whip’s a talkin’ about you.”

“When I plenty, you shall share
 Terrapin an’ coon an’ bear,
 Hoe-cake an’ possum fat,
 An’ when noting—*all* o’ dat.
 Ho! ho! win’ blow!
 Who see corn grow?”

“Hold still, Darling, ’till I jist giv dat fly on your ear a little touch o’ my whip. How you like em, ha?”

“Berry small my hut, indeed,
 But wat bigger can we need?
 If we fin’ it won’t hold two,
All outside I gib to you.
 Ho! ho! win’ blow!
 Who see corn grow?”

“Now you streak it! You’re tinkin’ ob de oats, but I ’spect you’ll be misappinted.”

“Freely den will I diwide
 Ebery ting wid my sweet bride;
 But if I should sleep for two,
All de work I leab to you.
 Ho! ho! win’ blow!
 Who see corn grow?”

“Hah! here we am in no time,” he added, as we en-

tered the noble avenue that led up to the mansion of Colonel Remsen.

The change from the family of Mickey Muckridge to Colonel Remsen's, was a delightful one. The Colonel and Mrs. Remsen were too sure of their social position to think it compromised by a show of kindness to their inferiors; and, while they never stooped to the gossiping familiarity with their servants, which some would-be gentlefolk mistake for graciousness, they never assumed airs of loftiness with the humble, so common with those who have but recently attained their present elevation. Winona, their only child, although beloved, and indulged, too, by every one in the house, was spoiled by none. Miss Penelope Pirnie, the housekeeper,—Aunt Neppy, as she was called by Winona, and, in imitation of her, by every one else,—though not without the peculiarities attributed to maiden ladies of a certain age, was as kind-hearted a creature as ever lived; and Agamemnon—who, born the slave of the Colonel's grandfather, and refusing the offers of freedom which had been repeatedly made to him, boasted of his bondage, and looked with pity, if not contempt, upon the “free niggers” of the neighborhood—was one of the most obliging, as well as merriest, beings in existence.

Besides the persons named, there was an occasional resident in this family of whom, while I think of it, I must make particular mention. Cortlandt Glenthorne was a lad about the age of Florence Nagle, and, like him, had received the advantage of as much education as could well be bestowed upon one of his age. He,

too, was an orphan; but, unlike Florence, was both rich and handsome. He was the ward of Colonel Remsen, and all his holidays were passed in this family, where his comings were looked forward to by old and young with anticipations of unalloyed pleasure. Like most of the young, he early attached himself to me, and we became very good friends at once, and every hour he could spare was spent with me and Winona in the nursery. But my friendship for him had no ill effect upon my preference for Florence, who was still the first in my affections, and whose visit of a Sunday afternoon I always counted upon as the crowning pleasure of the week.

But some, whose sight is better than mine, have assured me, that there are spots in the sun; and it is seldom, indeed, that the sky is wholly without a cloud. It is no wonder, then, that, to an eye which could look a little below the surface, slight faults were to be found even in this seemingly faultless family. Colonel Remsen was a gay man, very fond of society, and not always particular in the choice of it, and often indulged his convivial propensities to the injury of his health; and at these times Mrs. Remsen, usually of so equable a temper, became moody and irritable, or would shut herself up in a cold reserve, that would permit of no approach, beyond the strictest line of politeness. Aunt Neppy, with all her kind-heartedness, became at times a little wearisome, from her excessive particularity, not suffering even a floor to be swept except as she directed; and Cortlandt Glen-thorne, beneath a gay and prepossessing exterior,

nursed within his breast a love of wealth and power, that, if not timely corrected, might one day make of him a miser or a tyrant, or perhaps both. But, as these faults were revealed to me only by time, I will not anticipate time in their development, for, as hath been most wisely said, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

VIII.

THE NEW HOME.

ONE thing, however, I soon learned; and that was, that good Aunt Neppy was very fond of a little gossip, and, as I seemed to have become a great favorite with her, she was always ready to share this dish with me.

"Now, my dear," said she, entering my room one evening, knitting in hand, "I've come to spend an hour with you. Don't disturb yourself;—I can get a seat. Now let us set down shin and shin, and have a good dish o' chat. Do you know I love, of *all* things, to hear about York. 'Tis a terrible wicked place, they say."

"It has its due share of evil, I have no doubt;—but no *more*," I replied.

"O! my dear, don't tell me that. I never look at a paper that I don't see an account of a murder or robbery, or 'sault and battery case, at least. I wouldn't

live a month in that 'ere city to be mistress of all Gold street. Yet I should like to see it very much."

"And have you never seen it?" I asked with surprise.

"Not I. How could I? You know I couldn't reach it, except by water; and I wouldn't risk my life by going on board of one of them vessels for the hull State. I have never crossed a river in all my born days. Why, do you know? I have a sister livin' within twenty miles o' me, and in thirty years I have never seen her, because there is a river between us, and I don't think the bridge very safe."

"Well," said I, laughing, "in the present scarcity of good people, I suppose you are right."

"Ah, my dear, if I had been less afeared o' the water, I might be very differently sitewated now from what I am. I was onct young, as I suppose the oldest have been, and not bad looking, though perhaps you mayn't think so, and a young man from Philadelphia, who happened to be in this neighborhood then, wanted very badly to make me his wife. To this I might have consented, if he would but promise to settle down here. But no. His parents were in Philadelphia, and so was his business, and to Philadelphia he insisted upon my goin' with him. This I couldn't do; for as there was no way of goin' to it without crossin' water, I positively refused, and he left me in a huff. I have never seen him since," she added with a sigh, "but have been told that he is now a wealthy merchant, and the father o' the finest fa-

mily in the city, which mought ha' been mine but for my fear o' water."

The old lady was silent for a few minutes, and then abruptly said, interrogatively,

"But you have crossed more water than flows between this and Philadelphia?"

"I have come across the Atlantic; a distance of three thousand miles, or so."

"You don't tell me so! Well, I wouldn't ha' done it for all Europe, and a good slice of Asia into the bargain. Madam," (this was the title generally given to Mrs. Remsen,) "often banters me upon my folly, as she calls it, but till she can banter me into courage, it's o' no use."

"As you have never crossed water, you have not been much of a traveller, I suppose?"

"Well, I can't say that. Though I've not travelled far, I've travelled much, havin' been a great walker all my days. Why, do you know? I've walked clean to the DEVIL'S CHIMLEY and back in one day, a distance o' more than ten miles each way."

"The Devil's Chimney! Is that the name of a town?"

"O, no. It is a kind o' nateral curiosity, as a body may say. A column fifty feet high, or more, made up o' blue clay and stuns, that rises straight up from the bank o' the river, like one o' them pyramids we hear tell on. Some say 'tis hollow, and that airly in the mornin' you can see smoke comin' out of it, like any other chimley, from one o' the fires that the Old Boy keeps up down below. How true this is, I won't take

upon me to say ; but that the chimley is there I know, for I have seen it. 'Tis a frightful lookin' thing, standin' up all alone by itself, and people *do* say, that even more frightful things ha' been seen around it at night, pertickelarly since poor old Brom Van Gieson threw himself off the top on't, and dashed his brains out."

"But how could he climb to the top of a column like that?"

"Why, you see, though it rises straight up from the river, the side towards the land is rather slantindicular, and one can climb up it without any very great trouble. The boys, I'm told, do it often."

This was the first time I heard of the "Devil's Chimney," and I little thought then the interest with which I should one day regard it.

"I should not think," I remarked, "that Colonel Remsen, with the number of horses he has frequently unemployed, would suffer you to walk so far."

"'Tis no fault o' the Colonel's. He would give me a carriage to ride in every day in the week. But do you think I'd put my life at the marcy of a horse? No, my dear ! I know too well what horses can do, to trust my life to them. The Colonel's father had a beautiful pair o' horses, dark bays, with a white star in their foreheads, and the most magnificent tails ! and he loved them—jist as any Dutchman would love his horses—better than his wife. They were full o' life, to be sure, but with all their spirit, seemed as gentle as lambs. But, the wretches ! the Old Scratch was in 'em for all that. One day the old gentleman

driv over to Bramblebury, about twenty miles, takin' Master Schuy, that's the Colonel now, along with him, promisin' to return airly in the evenin'. But evenin' come, and night come too, without bringin' them. This, however, we didn't mind much, as the old gentleman was apt now and then to stay a little over his time, and the women folks on us were jist goin' to bed, when all at once, I heerd old Spring, the dog that always went with his master, go where he would, goin' on like everything at the kitchen door. I went down to see what was the matter, but ole Mem was there afore me. The dog flew up to us, barkin' with all his might, pullin' now at my gownd, and then at Mem's trowsers, and then runnin' down towards the gate, where he stopped and looked back, as if he wanted us to go with him. I was sure suthin' had happened, and so I told Mem, who went and got a lantern, and callin' up three o' the men, we set out to follow Spring, and the poor creatur' seemed to know as well as we did what we intended, for he wagged his tail, and trotted on before us just like a human bein'. By and by we met the horses comin' towards hum, but without the carriage, which we found about two miles further on, smashed all to pieces. Marcy me! when I see this I thought I should faint, but my anxiety about Master Schuy got the better o' my weakness, and I hurried on with the rest. O! Ellen, if I should live to be a hundred, I shall never forget that night! About a mile further on, at the foot of a very steep hill, we found the father and son lyin' within a few yards o' one another, to all appearance dead.

Poor old gentleman! it was more than appearance with him, for he was dead enough; but Master Schuy, who had been severely stunned by his fall, soon give signs o' life, and in a little while was able to tell us all about it; which was, that the horses got frightened as they were comin' down the hill, and run away. Wasn't it dreadful? You haven't been here long enough yet," continued the old lady, lowering her voice, and looking cautiously around, "to notice anything pertickelar about the Colonel; but I have always thought, and so has Mem, that his brain was a little hurt that night. He has been very queer at times ever since, and the least excitement in the world, no matter whether from sorrow or joy, makes him jist like a crazy man. Madam knows this, and generally tries to humor him, though, may be, not so much as she mought."

Here the old lady made a pause of several minutes, and plied her needles with great rapidity. She then resumed the conversation, if that can be called conversation, when the talk is engrossed by one of the parties, but in a tone of some dissatisfaction.

"Religion is a very good thing, Ellen, but what's the use o' quarrellin' about it? For my own part, I don't think it matters much what church one goes to, so that one goes to some church. We have, as I suppose you know, only one meetin' house within some miles of us, and I have always gone to that, though it has belonged sometimes to one denomination and sometimes to another,—Dutch Deformed, Baptists, Methodists, and Swedenbuggers. But to this meetin'

house, and indeed every meetin' house that I know on, Madam has always refused to go, and not only that, but even refused to let Nony go, though her father has often wished it. You see, when the Colonel married Madam—she was then Claire Dupuy—they agreed that their boys should go to church with him, and the gals with her. But as they've never had any boys, and Madam don't go to church herself, the Colonel thinks she mought let Winona go now and then with him. But Madam keeps him to his bargain, and so you see the poor child is left to grow up without any religion at all."

"What is Madam's religion?" I asked.

The old lady lowered her voice almost to a whisper, and looking in my face with an expression of pitying wonder, answered,

"She's a ROMAN CATHOLIC! Isn't it dreadful?"

IX.

THE HUSKING FROLIC.

"GOLLY, Mas'er Cort, shan't we hab fun to-night?" exclaimed old Agamemnon, with a laugh all over his shining black face, coming up to the piazza, where Cortlandt was romping with Winona, and I stood, with some work in my hands, pretending to listen to the "Dreadful Accidents" and "Shocking Calamities"

that Aunt Neppy was reading to me from a newspaper, which she had intercepted on its way to Colonel Remsen.

"Why, Mem," asked the young gentleman addressed, "what's to happen to-night?"

"Why, don't you know Mas'er Schuyler"—the name always given to the Colonel by this old servant—"is a goin' to gib a Huskin' Frolic to-night?"

"Ho ho! win' blow!
Who see corn grow?"

"Indeed! Then we shall have fun. You have never been at a 'Husking Frolic' I suppose, Ellen?"

"Why how could she?" asked Aunt Neppy, a little impatient at having her listener's attention drawn away from the list of casualties over which she had been groaning for the last half hour. "You know they have no such things as Huskin' Frolics in York city."

"Of course not, Aunt Neppy, of course not."

"What," I asked, "is a Husking Frolic?"

"Don't know what a Huskin' Frolic is, Miss Ellen? Well, dat *is* good," said Mem, and the old negro laughed loud and long at this proof of my ignorance, and then repeated a stanza of his favorite song:

"Wen I meat I gib you bone;
Wen I peach I gib you stone;
Ob my apple pare an' core—
Wat could lubbing heart do more?
Ho! ho! win' blow!
Who see corn grow?"

"It is a gathering of young and old for the purpose of stripping the husks or covering from the corn," answered Cortlandt, "during which much cider, or something stronger, is drunk, and a great deal of bad wit circulated, and it generally winds up with a 'pawm play' or dance, for of course it is held in a barn. You must certainly go and see it."

"Do women go?"

"Of course they do. What kind of play or dance could be got up without the girls?"

"Why, no kind, to be sure," said Aunt Neppy. "But O, Ellen, just listen to this. 'A TERRIBLE DISASTER!'"

"Stop," said Cortlandt, pretending to read from a paper he took from his pocket, "and hear this first. 'SHOCKING CASUALTY! A fire broke out last Saturday night in the carpenter's shop of Mr. Napoleon Brown, of Scrubtown, which, before it could be arrested, spread to an adjoining *sty*, in which were a sow and nine beautiful pigs, belonging to Mr. Horatio Nelson Jones, and, dreadful to relate! every one of these poor innocents perished in the flames!'"

"Golly!" exclaimed old Mem, with one of his most obstreperous bursts of laughter, "dat Mister Jones hab plenty roast pig."

Aunt Neppy walked into the house with an air of offended dignity, and read no more for me that day.

In the evening I went with Aunt Neppy, Cortlandt Glenthorne, and a young woman named Laura Burdock, to join in the Husking Frolic in the barn, at which all the family were present, except Mrs. Remsen,

who always kept "her state," and Winona, whom I left asleep in her mother's room. This Laura Burdock was one who must not be entirely overlooked in this eventful history; for, though she seemed intended by Nature to be nothing more than a supernumerary in the drama of life, the part she was subsequently induced to play has given her an importance to which she would not otherwise be entitled. She was the child of poor and improvident parents, who, at their death, would have left her to utter destitution, but for the kindness of Mrs. Remsen, who gave her a home, and almost the treatment of her own child, with sufficient education, in case of need, to earn a livelihood without stooping to the drudgery of menial service. She was a pleasant, intelligent, and apparently kind-hearted little thing, for, more than twenty, she did not look to be fifteen, and I soon became very much attached to her, without reflecting that one may indeed "look like the innocent flower," and yet "be the serpent under it." But I am anticipating as usual.

Besides ourselves, and we mustered pretty strong, there were fifty or sixty persons from the village and surrounding country, who came to share in the labor and amusements of the night. The assemblage was certainly a motley one. But, although all social distinctions seemed for the time forgotten—Colonel Remsen entering into the fun of the moment with as much heartiness as old Mem himself—not a word was uttered by the most clownish at which even prudery need pretend to blush.

"I declare, Ellen," said Aunt Neppy, giving me a nudge, about half an hour after we entered, "if there a'nt a fellow at t'other side the barn that's been a throwin' sheep's eyes at you ever since we came in. Who is it?"

I followed the direction of her slightly raised finger, and sure enough, there was my faithful adorer, Barney Sheehan, trying to look the victim of unrequited passion, but making himself, as I thought, supremely ridiculous; and not far from him, watching both him and me, was my amiable friend Kezi. I felt annoyed, and would gladly have returned at once to the house, to avoid speaking to him; but, as I could not do this, I made up my mind to bear the affliction of his presence with a good grace, and, when he came across to speak to me, I not only replied civilly to his warm expressions of pleasure at meeting me once again, but even introduced him to Aunt Neppy and Laura, to the former of whom he rendered himself so agreeable that she invited him, at parting, to call at MONT CLAIRE, the name that, in compliment to his wife, the Colonel had given to his place, and more than once, after we got home, declared Mr. Shin—the nearest she could come to Sheehan—to be a very nice sort of young man. The latter did not appear to be so much taken with her new acquaintance, whom she pronounced both stilted and dogmatical, and was very severe upon his gray trowsers and green breastpin.

In the course of the evening Muckridge joined the huskers, and I was surprised at the familiarity of his manner towards the Colonel, so markedly his superior

in all that constitutes the man and the gentleman, and was really annoyed to find that Colonel Remsen submitted to it with so much patience. He either did not, or would not see it. Then I could not tell which, but I think I can now.

The husking over, the floor was cleared, and a temporary table formed the whole length of the capacious barn, on which a cold, but most excellent, supper was laid, at which all, except the blacks who waited at it, sat down to the enjoyment of more good things than were at first promised, for the restraint which at first had bridled most tongues, being now removed, the wit of the company was allowed full play, and, notwithstanding Cortlandt's remark upon the quality of it, I will venture to say, that there was as much of the genuine article put in circulation as could be found among persons of greater pretensions to cultivation and refinement.

After the table was removed, an old one-eyed negro was introduced, who sat down and sawed upon an old cracked fiddle, till near two o'clock in the morning, to the great delight of a large portion of the company, whose dancing, if not elegant, most certainly was *strong*. But to this part of the entertainment I did not long remain a witness, nor did I at any time join in it, although urged by Muckridge to foot it in a jig with him to "The wind that shakes the barley," or, as it has been naturalized in this country, "The green fields of America."

X.

ADVICE GIVEN AND TAKEN.

ONE Sunday, about a month after this, Florence Nagle came, as usual, to spend the evening with me. The pale cheek of the boy had become paler since I saw him last, and his melancholy seemed to have settled into deeper despondence. I had felt a sister's interest in this unfriended youth, and was now seriously alarmed for his health.

"Have you been ill, Florence?" I asked, as soon as I found ourselves alone, for Aunt Neppy had come in, just before he entered, to tell me of some terrible mishap which she had that afternoon heard after "meetin'," and remained with us much longer than I had any wish she should, making particular inquiries after Mr. Shin, who had already been twice to visit her since the night of the husking, and every time making a more favorable impression.

"No, Ellen," he answered, "not ill;—at least not ill in body."

"But in mind, Florence?"

"Alas, yes."

"And why is this?"

"Can you, who know Muckridge and his brother, ask such a question?" he asked, reproachfully.

I was silent, for I knew not what to say.

"I am sick at heart," he added, gloomily, "when

I think of the hopelessness of my present situation. Doomed to toil, day after day, under the humiliating exactions of a cold-hearted task-master, for the food necessary to the support of a miserable life, while the energies, with which heaven has endowed me, are, by the feebleness of the body in which they are confined, hourly withering away, and must soon become extinct."

"Why, my dear Florence," said I, laying my hand kindly upon his arm, "should this be? You must remember, that for every talent committed to our keeping, we are accountable to the Lender, and its wilful neglect can hardly be called less criminal than the abuse of it, or he that allows his energies to wither than he who misapplies them."

"O! Ellen," said he, with strong emotion, "what can I do? Young, poor, and in wretched health."

"The two first," I answered cheerfully, "are in your favor. Youth is the season of hope, and poverty a stimulus to exertion. Ill health may impede the proper working of your energies for a time, but cannot destroy them, as history will inform you; and though you may not command armies, or take an active part in the politics of the day, MIND can make itself felt from the cell of the monk as well as from the bureau of a Secretary of State. To will, where the exertion is purely mental, is to be."

This reasoning, which seems so fine in writing, was at that moment thrown away, for the lad, whose elbow had been resting upon the table between us, now covered his face with his hand, and broke into a pas-

sionate fit of weeping; and believing it to be a relief to his overcharged heart, I allowed him to cry on without interruption. But Winona, who had been sitting in a corner of the room, trying to teach Julie a prayer which I had taught her, rose from her little chair, and, coming up on tiptoe, threw her arm around his neck, and laying her beautiful cheek to his, said caressingly,

"Don't cry, little boy. My papa shall be your papa, and Nony will be your sister."

There was magic in these few words, as there must ever be in the language of kindness, and Florence, who had disregarded my weak attempts at reasoning, stooped and kissed the cheek that had been pressed to his, and his weeping ceased.

"I will go to New York," said Florence, when Winona had returned to her doll.

"For what purpose?" I asked.

"To push my fortune."

"In what way?"

"I have some talent for writing. Every talent, as you have just said, must be put to its proper use, and mine, instead of being wasted upon idle verses, might, by connecting myself with one of the leading journals, be made not only serviceable to me, but of benefit to others."

"You are too young, Florence, for that at present, even if you should succeed in connecting yourself with one of the journals, which I very much doubt. I am not, of course, acquainted with literary matters, and therefore cannot say how far your talents, which

I think highly of, could be made available in a newspaper. But I am strongly opposed to forcing the mind into unhealthy action, which would be the case if, with your total want of all practical knowledge of the world, and the crudeness of much that you have acquired from books, you were obliged to furnish a certain amount of reading matter daily, at the command of a task-master more exacting than Muckridge—I mean the ever-devouring but never satisfied Public. Besides, labor of this kind is but poorly rewarded, except where the laborer is able to set his own price upon his work, which one who has not yet made a name can never do. Now, instead of the course you were about to choose, let me mark out one for you."

"I will, with pleasure," he answered eagerly.

"Then this it is. You shall make choice of some business, trade, or profession, by which you can earn a present living. It matters not how humble it may appear in the eyes of the world, or your own, if it be not in itself disgraceful, which nothing that is honest can well be, in this country at least. Perhaps, to one of your turn of mind, a clerkship in a respectable lawyer's office would be the best thing you could try for. Your salary would of course be small; but you must keep your wants within your means, and be a strict economist of time, as far as you can be so without injury to your health. The necessary care being taken of the body, you must then prepare to provide properly for the mind. You must continue your habits of reading and writing; but choose your books less

for the amusement they may afford than for the information they can impart, and, as the majority of readers understand prose better than poetry, exercise yourself as much in that kind of writing as you can. In ten or twelve years, if you still wish to pursue a literary career, you will be enabled to take a fair start."

"Twelve years!" exclaimed the boy, with a look of consternation.

"Twelve years, Florence; and you will find them few enough."

The next week he left for New York; where, through the kindness of Colonel Remsen, who warmly recommended him to a friend, he soon after obtained just such a situation as I had pointed out to him, and entered upon his Twelve Years of probation; and I saw him not again until time and endurance had written "MAN" upon his brow.

But those twelve years—a drop in the great ocean of time—what changes had they not wrought! For good much, but for evil more. Nothing was as it had been, except perhaps Aunt Neppy and old Mem, neither of whom seemed to grow either less young or less active than I had known them at first. But Winona, now about eighteen, had shot up into a beautiful girl, on the very verge of womanhood; her mother was in the rich autumn of her beauty, but it was an autumn that seemed to foretell an early winter; while her father, whose fine athletic frame had promised a long struggle with the Great Wrestler, was sinking fast into the feebleness of age, and giving

every day some new proof of the disordered mind, of which Aunt Neppy had early given me a hint. Cortlandt Glenthorne, still almost as much one of the family as when he was the ward of Colonel Remsen, and likely to become even more so, as the husband of Winona, had, according to the promise of his youth, grown up one of the finest men I have ever seen, and, with great wealth and considerable talent, possessed an influence in his county that was shared by none. No, not even the mighty Muckridge, who had wrung from the hard hands of his customers wealth even greater than Glenthorne's, and whose notions of his own importance had increased with every dollar he laid by—an importance that was acknowledged by all around him, except Kezi, who still continued "to boss the Boss."

But in none of all I have named had those twelve years wrought greater, or rather more striking changes than in Barney Sheehan and his niece, Miss Jerusha Ann Muckridge. Barney was now the successor to Muckridge in the store, and consequently in the high road to wealth and distinction. This he felt, and determined that others should feel it too, poor humble I, of course, the very first, for having dared to refuse my hand to one whom I had confessed I could neither love nor respect. My blunt avowal had offended him deeply, and, though long dissembled, I was made to feel his resentment at last, by every means to which a little mind could stoop; passing me now with a supercilious nod, then overlooking my presence in a room with others, or, in company with strangers, re-

minding me of something that happened while I was living with his brother,—all of which I bore with an unruffled spirit, for I despised the creature too much to be angry with him. Not so was it with Aunt Neppy. When he first came to the Colonel's, as my acquaintance, if not suitor, the good lady had taken a prodigious fancy to one who seemed so worthy of any girl's acceptance. But, long as his gray trowsers were, they could not altogether conceal the cloven foot, which, with the keen eye of a woman, Aunt Neppy discovered the moment it peeped out. She was too honest not to acknowledge the discovery she had made, and now as often rated me for the meanness of spirit I showed, in bearing so tamely the indignities he was constantly heaping upon me, and finally declared, that, if I did not put a stop to his visits, she would. But Barney, when he once got a foothold, was not one easy to dislodge; and finding how fast he was losing ground in Aunt Neppy's favor, sought to retain his place in the house by paying court to Laura Burdock, who, from a motive not thought of then, but since clearly understood, encouraged his attentions, and thus secured to him the privilege of visiting at the Colonel's.

In twelve years Jerusha Ann, from a plain, dull, uninteresting child, had become a woman—a gay, dashing woman—who, though scarcely twenty-one, began to think her claims to consideration had been sadly disregarded by the sterner sex, not one of whom had yet proposed to her a settlement in life. And, as must be conceded, those claims were not few. It

is true, she had neither high birth, great beauty, nor fine talent. But she had what is higher than birth, greater than beauty, finer than talent. *She had wealth.* Besides this, she was highly accomplished; having spent five years at a fashionable boarding school, in learning everything in the world—but what was useful. And yet she had not received an offer; while it was currently reported that her friend—*her* friend!—Winona Remsen, younger than she by three years, with little more wealth, and who had been taught in a humdrum sort of way at home, was actually going to be married! The thing was hardly to be borne.

But what change, it may be asked, had those twelve years wrought in the author of these pages? To myself, very little that was perceptible. My figure was less girlish, but my face something fuller, and a little more florid, than when I left the city so long before, for a temporary sojourn of three months in the country. My hair, which was still abundant, might have had here and there a silver thread mixed with the black, and I occasionally found, at night, some difficulty in threading a very fine needle. But I ate well, slept well, and was generally in good spirits; so that, whatever the change, I had no great cause of complaint against it.

XI.

A PRESAGE OF EVIL.

"YOU are dull to night, Aunt Neppy," said I, one evening, after the good lady had set for half an hour in my room, without regaling me with the crimes or casualties of the day, or correcting me for the awkward manner in which I held my needles while knitting.

"Am I?" she said, looking up, but not with her usual pleasant smile. "Well, may be I be," she added with a sigh. "I don't think I'm quite as sharp as I used to be. Between ourselves, Nelly, things a'nt a goin' right in this family jist now. We see entirely too much o' them Muckridges for our comfort. Why, do you know? that bloated old MONEY BAGS, Muckridge, has been with the Colonel all mornin', and, somehow, things always go wrong arter one of his visitations; and that flirt of a thing, Rushy Ann, is invited to come and spend a week with Nony. Arter that, I shouldn't be surprised any day to see that turkey gobbler, Barney Shin, strut into the parlor, and take a seat in the Colonel's own easy-chair. Ah, my good gal, times have changed with us indeed, when Mickey Muckridge's da'hter is invited to spend a week with Winona Remsen!"

"How do you think," I asked, "will this intimacy suit Cortland?"

"O, I don't know," she answered, with a greater show of ill-humor than I had ever before witnessed. "It seems to me that Cortlandt is changing with everything else. When he first came here a little boy, and little boys a'nt apt to be pertickelar in sich things, he looked upon the Muckridges as creaturs entirely beneath his notice, and I often had to scold him and Laura Burdock for makin' fun of people, that I then thought to be a very good sort of people indeed. But now he's as often at Stunny Bottom as he is here, and I don't see but he's as intimate with old MONEY BAGS as he is with his *gardeen*. I don't understand it," she answered, with a puzzled look.

There were more than Aunt Neppy who did not understand it, and among these were Mrs. Remsen and her daughter, who, while, in compliance with the wishes of the Colonel, they treated the Muckridges with marked politeness, and admitted Jerusha Ann to a sort of intimacy, always, it seemed to me, acted as if they did not know why they did so.

And why was it so? Why did Mrs. Remsen, who, like most Europeans, entertained exaggerated notions of what was due to high birth, bend her lofty nature to almost an equality with one like Muckridge, who had neither mind nor manners to atone for his original meanness of extraction? And why did Winona, highly gifted as she was beautiful, stoop to even the semblance of an intimacy with one so inferior to her, in every respect, as this Jerusha Ann Muckridge?

Perhaps from a wish to gratify the husband and father, who seemed lately to court the friendship of these people, or perhaps in obedience to his commands. At present I cannot say which.

XII.

RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES.

COLONEL REMSEN was, to all seeming, an excellent man; kind to every creature around him, from the beautiful woman who bore his name, to the meanest animal that was fed by his bounty. But evil in the heart of man, like fire in wood, cannot long be hidden, and must, if not timely quenched, produce general devastation. With much that was good, and even great, in his character, there was also no small portion of alloy. Correct in purpose, he was wanting in firmness, and liberal in sentiment, he was narrow and strong in his prejudices. Through the first, he was often led to do many things which his judgment must condemn; and under the influence of the latter, was too apt to act counter to his better feelings. Now unjust towards others, but more frequently unjust towards himself, the evil of his nature—thus compounded of weakness in right and strength in wrong—produced, in time, its natural work of ruin.

Whether the cause or the effect of the mental in-

firmity now so apparent, at least to me, I am not able to say, but a great and most lamentable change had lately taken place in the habits of the Colonel. He had always been what is called a gay man, and one whose society was generally courted, and would, though rarely, sometimes overstep the strict line of sobriety, a thing so common among gentlemen then, that it was thought hardly worth a remark. But now, his overstepping that line was a circumstance of almost weekly occurrence, though long hidden from every one in the house except Mrs. Remsen, Aunt Neppy, old Mem, and Laura Burdock. For my part, I did not even suspect such a thing, until it was known to almost every creature in the neighborhood.

On looking back to this time, I often wonder at my blindness, in not making the discovery sooner, particularly as Aunt Neppy, whenever she noticed any unusual gayety on the part of the Colonel, would say to me, with an ominous shake of the head,

"There'll be trouble soon. Mem had better keep a sharp look-out arter his master to-day. When there's so much wind, we must expect a little rain."

After this he would be missing for a day or two, and sometimes more, when he would return quietly under cover of the night, accompanied by old Mem, and retire at once to his own chamber, from which he would not emerge for several days; and when he did, how wretched and wo-begone he would look! and so sunk in misery, that the beggar by the wayside might well be envied by the rich and powerful Colo-

nel Remsen! I have since been told that at such times it was necessary to watch him narrowly, to prevent his laying violent hands upon himself. During these paroxysms, Mrs. Remsen always confined herself to her own room, and would not admit even the visits of her daughter. But old Mem—with a fidelity seldom found, save in dogs—followed his master whithersoever he went, and never suffered him, day or night, to be a moment alone, until the cloud was lifted that had darkened his soul.

Alas, what is the strength of man! I have seen this Colonel Remsen sit and bewail his weakness with the passion of a child, and yet, almost before the tears were well dried upon his cheeks, he would yield to it again.

But the evil arising from the inherent weakness of his nature, was little less mischievous in its effects than that which sprang from his prejudices—the growth of education.

Colonel Remsen, without any practical knowledge of religion of any kind, and entertaining rather vague, if not contradictory notions on the subject, had imbibed, with his first draught of life, strong dislike of a large portion of the Christian family, a dislike which time and education had only served to harden into positive hatred. This was his feeling when he first met Claire Dupuy, then in the radiant morning of her wonderful beauty.

The father of Claire, a French gentleman of high character, but withal a prudent man of the world, seeing the effect of his daughter's charms upon the

heart of the young American, allowed things to take their natural course, until the passion of the youth had brought him to make a tender of hand and fortune to his fair enslaver, before he recollected that Claire was of the obnoxious faith. A few months before, he would have considered this an insuperable barrier to their union. But now, so much was he in love, he entirely overlooked or overleaped it, and readily agreed to the condition, by which he could alone obtain her father's consent to a marriage with his daughter,—that not only should Claire be allowed the free exercise of her own religion, but have the entire control of the religious education of their daughters. The compromise was agreed to ; the sacrifice was made, although no prejudice was abandoned, and Claire Dupuy became the wife of Schuyler Remsen.

Their marriage had every outward appearance of happiness. They were young and wealthy, with talents to adorn society, and to render home happy. But in the golden chain by which they were united there was one imperfect link. *They could not pray together.* This was not at first discovered, for the religion of Claire, like that of her husband, being more of the head than of the heart, this want of perfect union was not felt by them. But when trials came, as trials must come to all, and the blessed interchange of thoughts and feelings, which gives strength to weakness, and smooths whatever is rugged in the path of married life, was forever interrupted by the bickerings of Religious Strife, both bewailed the folly of which they had been guilty, in bringing this unholy spirit to their hearth.

Colonel Remsen had paid so much regard to the promise he had given his wife before their marriage—that of not interfering with her religious belief—that he never even invited her to accompany him to the only church in the neighborhood, of which, though not a member, he was a pretty regular attendant; and as there was no church of her faith nearer than New York, and as she seldom went to this in her frequent visits to the city, Mrs. Remsen had little difficulty in showing the same forbearance towards him. But about a year before I became a resident of Mont Claire, upon a clergyman, who had been travelling through the country, to seek out and bring back the wanderers from the fold, coming to perform the offices of his ministry in Stony Bottom, the Colonel intimated to his wife his wish to accompany her to the house of Muckridge, the parlor of which, for want of a better, had been turned into a temporary chapel for the occasion.

The Catholics of that day, and indeed of a much later day, in such places as Stony Bottom, were mostly of that class, who are called by the natives, the *Low Irish*—a people who have escaped from poverty and degradation at home, to meet with labor and contempt in the land of the stranger, but who bear with them, wherever they go, the same love for the OLD FAITH which nerved the hearts of their fathers to suffer wrongs and spoliations, and even death for the maintenance of it. The report that Mass was to be said in Stony Bottom drew a crowd of these people together, and, at the time the Remsens arrived,

the house was so full that it seemed almost impossible for them to obtain standing room. But, with characteristic politeness, and their usual good humor, these uncouth looking beings, by pressing closer together, opened a passage for the Colonel and his lady to the seats that had been reserved for them in front of the altar.

Father Gormley, the clergyman on this occasion, was no doubt a good man, and one very deservedly beloved by those who knew him. But he was no orator, and had nothing of the gentleman in his manner, and his hastily composed sermon was so bunglingly delivered, that Colonel Remsen wished it finished before it was half done. Then, though married to a woman who called herself a Catholic, and the father of a child that, by his own voluntary promise, was to be one, he had never before been present at the celebration of a Mass, and without endeavoring in the least to make himself acquainted with their meaning, he looked upon the crossings, kneelings, and other ceremonies with which it was attended, not only as useless, but perfectly ridiculous, and could hardly wait for the reading of the last Gospel before he rose and quitted the room.

"My dear Claire," said he, as soon as they were in the carriage, "how can one of your refinement and good sense join in worship with the kind of people we have left, and look with reverence upon the mummery we have just witnessed?"

He spoke in a tone of irritation, and Mrs. Remsen, who had been annoyed by the crowd, and disappoint-

ed in the clergyman, answered in the same, not in defence of her own form of worship, but in retorting upon his. The imperfect link in their chain of happiness now slightly gave way, and it went on from that day yielding little by little until it was finally sundered; a consummation hastened, if not produced, by the interference of one of those ranting, canting pests of society, who endeavor to show their love to God by filling the hearts of his creatures with hatred against one another.



XIII.

THE SPIRIT OF DISCORD.

ABOUT this time a young man, one McClavers, became the teacher of the small school that was supported, during the winter months, by the few farmers around Stony Bottom, who chose to give something like an education to their children. He had come among them unheralded and unrecommended, and without a line of introduction to any one in the neighborhood. But these he stood not in need of. The face of Hector McClavers was, in his opinion, sufficient recommendation of the owner, and his tongue could not fail to introduce him to any society;—the one had a show of honesty which was not always confirmed by the actions of the man, and the other

was endued with a plausibility that indeed might "wheedle with the devil." In person he was tall and thin, but by no means ill-formed, and his manners, though without any high polish, had the smoothness of one who had mixed a good deal with the world. Exteriorly, if there was not much to admire in the man, there was as little to condemn, and the rancorous spirit within him—of intolerance of every one who differed from him in matters of faith—did not often manifest itself, until it was sure of succeeding in its work of uncharitableness.

To what sect he had originally belonged, I do not know; but, following out the precept of the Apostle, to "try all things," he had already called himself by almost every name by which the divisions in the Christian family are known, and, in every change, while claiming infallibility for himself, was sweeping in his condemnations of all who differed from him. But as I do not wish to confound the people to whom he now belonged with him, I need not mention here the name he bore at this time.

It was then, and probably is, the custom in places like Stony Bottom to invite the schoolmaster, whose calling is received as a patent of gentility, to the houses of all who have any claim to respectability, and this act of courtesy was extended to McClavers by Colonel Remsen, at whose table he soon became a frequent and welcome guest.

If some, by the exercise of hospitality, have "entertained angels unawares," others, by the show of civility which is required by the usages of society,

have not unfrequently received spirits of a very different character. Such, at least, was the case in the present instance. The unhappy cause of difference between Colonel Remsen and his wife, though not often alluded to in conversation, was seldom absent from their thoughts, and, as if prompted by the spirit of discord, this was the subject on which the new schoolmaster was always most eloquent;—at one time arguing gravely against the errors of Romanism, and at another levelling at them the shafts of his wit, yet being, or affecting to be, ignorant of the insult he was thereby offering to the mistress of the house, by assailing her religion.

Into these discussions Mrs. Remsen never entered. Though firmly convinced of the truth of the faith in which she had been educated, she was but ill prepared, by reading or proper instruction, to defend it against the attacks of McClavers, who could not breathe but in an atmosphere of controversy, and, besides, she shrank from argument with the delicacy of a true woman. This silence on the part of his wife was sadly misinterpreted by the Colonel, who believed, because she said nothing, there was nothing to be said in favor of the religion in which he had pledged himself to bring up his only child, and feeling that he had no right to sacrifice the happiness of an immortal being to a mere punctilio, he now tried, by arguments and entreaties, and finally by the authority of a husband, to prevail upon Mrs. Remsen to permit him to have his daughter reared in the religion of his ancestors.

But Mrs. Remsen was inflexible. Winona should be a Catholic, or nothing; and nothing she was likely to be, if I had not—little as I was fitted for the task—taken upon myself the duties of instructress, and given to her young mind the bias that it ever after retained.

XIV.

ANTICIPATED EVIL.

“WELL, she’s here at last, bag and baggage,” exclaimed Aunt Neppy one morning, as I met her on the stairs.

“Who’s here?” I asked.

“Why that Rushy Ann Muckridge.”

“Well,” said I.

“*Well*, Nelly? No, my good gal, it an’t well with a family like this, when the likes of her is made a companion on.”

“You must forget, Aunt Neppy, what Jerusha Ann has been, and remember what she is.”

“And what is she, I’d like to know?”

“She is rich and well educated.”

“Rich she may be, but what made her rich? The hard arnins of the miserable mountaineers, that her father almost robbed them of. I hope you don’t call it bein’ well edicated, not to know how to do nothin’ but gabble French, and twingle twangle a little on the peaner?”

"Whatever I may think of it," I answered, "that is what half the world would call being well educated."

"Then there's more fools in the world than I thought," said the old lady sharply, and passed on.

Whatever might have been Aunt Neppy's opinion or mine on the subject of education, it was certain that Jerusha Ann looked upon herself as a most accomplished young lady, and she omitted no opportunity of impressing this belief upon the minds of others; entering eagerly on, and discussing freely, every subject that was started in her presence, in a language peculiarly her own, compounded of indifferent English and worse French, with here and there a slight touch of Irish, borrowed from her father and uncle, or dashing away at the piano, with a fury almost frightening, with the evident intention of extorting the admiration of all around her, and throwing poor Winona completely into the shade. But she failed in both her objects. To admire anything so superficial would be impossible for any one but a fool, and the subdued manner and true feminine grace of Winona Remsen never appeared to such advantage as when contrasted with the dash and *fussiness* of Jerusha Ann Muckridge. Yet she commanded attention, the easy substitute for admiration, and this too from Cortlandt Glenthorne, the "observed of all observers," and with this she was satisfied.

From long neglect, the affairs of Colonel Remsen now gave signs of serious embarrassment. With this old Mem was the first to become acquainted, from

the shifts to which he saw his master have frequent recourse, to raise the money necessary for the ordinary expenses of his family, and yet, so far from adopting any system of retrenchment, he seemed every day to launch out into greater extravagance. This was particularly the case during the week of Jerusha Ann's visit, when every day was turned into a festival.

"Wilful waste makes woful want," said Aunt Neppy, shaking her head ruefully, "and all this waste for the da'hter of sich a man as Muckridge!"

"Times is changed, sure enough, Miss Nelpie," chimed in Agamemnon, who was always careful to call Aunt Neppy by the name he had first known her by, "when all these doins am for dat gal; an' 'atween ourselves, an' Miss Nelly here, I'm berry much afear'd dey will get no better fas.

'Ho! ho! win' blow!
Who see corn grow?"

Mem was right. Things did go on from bad to worse, until it was found necessary to ask aid or advice from some one, to deliver the Colonel from the difficulties in which he was involved. The man chosen for this purpose was Cortlandt Glenthorne. He had been the Colonel's ward, and was now the accepted lover of his daughter, and he would certainly be the one to interest himself most warmly in the affair, when he knew that he had been made choice of by Winona herself.

He came. An explanation was entered into.

Some years before, the Colonel had been induced to join in a speculation, to work some mine or other, that must, in the short space of three years, make a return of five hundred per cent. For this purpose he required ready money; and, as he had none of his own, he raised the necessary sum of Muckridge, by giving a mortgage upon the best part of his estate. But, instead of the splendid return of five hundred per cent, in three years, in nine months the speculation was proven to be an utter failure. By this misadventure he was greatly annoyed; but as Muckridge assured him that he was in no hurry for his money, and would be very well content to let it remain on interest for years to come, he allowed himself to be lulled into a false security, and took no necessary steps for discharging the debt.

It was about this time too that the difference I have spoken of arose between the Colonel and his wife; and, in consequence of that difference, the affair of the loan from Muckridge, and of the mortgage given to secure the payment of it, was kept from the knowledge of Mrs. Remsen, who, so far from assisting him, by economical management, to cancel it, allowed things to take their usual course, and by her liberal expenditure, added greatly to the embarrassments of her husband, whose wild extravagance, by rendering him unable to pay off the interest, was hastening the ruin that he now deemed inevitable, for his creditor was becoming clamorous in his demands for payment, believing, perhaps, there was nothing further to be gained by delay.

XV.

THE ANTICIPATION REALIZED.

WINONA had watched, with intense interest, the looks of her lover, as he examined the papers which her father had left in his hands, and soon became alarmed at their deepening gloom.

"Tell me, Cortlandt," she at length asked, "are the affairs of my father as desperate as my fears would make them?"

"They are beyond redemption," he answered, in a tone of unwonted harshness.

"Surely you cannot mean this?"

"Indeed I do. The money originally borrowed of Muckridge, and for which your father gave him a lien upon the better part of his estate, was ten thousand dollars."

"Was that all?" she asked, with a delighted look.

"All?" said he sharply. "And is not that enough?"

"O yes, certainly enough," she answered, evidently hurt by his manner, "but much less than I feared. And as I have one half of it already, and the other half can be easily raised among our friends, I do not think we should look upon it as such a bugbear."

"You the one half of it?"

"O yes. Do you not remember the five thousand dollars left me by my grandfather Dupuy, and which is to become mine the day I am eighteen?"

"And that time is nearly three months off," he answered drily.

"Yes, but three months will soon pass, and, in the meantime, we can exert ourselves to raise the rest among our friends."

"Rather a precarious hope. One's friends are not very ready now-a-days to show their friendship by lending money. But, Winona, you did not hear me out. The worst is yet to come."

Winona looked earnestly at him, but said nothing.

"The mortgage," he continued, "was, as I said, for ten thousand dollars. But that mortgage was granted many years ago, and has since been twice renewed; and each renewal, by adding the unpaid interest to the principal, has made it heavier, until it now amounts to something like double the original sum; and of this Muckridge demands immediate payment, or Mont Claire must be sold."

"Mont Claire sold!" exclaimed Winona. "O impossible! It would kill my poor mother outright. This must be prevented."

"But how?"

"By raising the sum necessary to pay off this debt."

"My dear Winona, you speak of raising twenty thousand dollars, as if it were the easiest thing in the world. The money market, I am assured, never was in this country as tight as it is at present, and——"

"I know nothing of the money market," she said impatiently, "but I know where there is a will there is a way. My father, you tell me, is indebted to this

Muckridge twenty thousand dollars; and justly, I suppose. For the payment of this sum, a property, worth at least three times the amount, is to be sacrificed, because there is no one who will come forward to prevent it. Cortlandt Glenthorne, you can save my father; and, if you have any regard for his daughter, you must," and she rose and walked the room.

"Can you doubt that regard?" he asked; "that love which has become a part of my very existence?"

"I should indeed be sorry to," she answered in a more subdued tone, and returning to her seat, "for upon a belief in that have I founded my hopes of future happiness. But the happiness of my parents is dearer to me than my own; and, unless you can aid in securing theirs, you must destroy mine."

"But how can I do that?"

"Without much difficulty, I think. You are known to have a handsome, unincumbered property."

"Handsome, certainly, but not as unincumbered as you suppose. My late improvements have cost me a great deal of money, indeed all I had at command, and a little more, for which I have had to become obliged to a friend."

"Well, at any rate, you have that knowledge of business which my poor father unfortunately has never had; and by proper management, by a fair representation, I mean, of things as they are, you can obtain among your friends, in loans for two, three, or four years, sufficient to cancel this mortgage, and, to secure to them the repayment of the money thus

advanced, other mortgages can be executed in favor of the lenders. And, until these are paid off, my father can do without his carriage and horses, and the number of people he has now about him; and, letting Mont Claire to a good tenant, we can go, like many other persons of small means, and take board in some quiet place upon my five thousand."

"Your plan is certainly a good one, if it could only be properly carried out. But, even if I could raise the money among my friends, which I very much doubt, it would be impossible for you to lead the life you propose. Indulgences, to one brought up as your mother has been, are as necessary as the air she breathes, and the unfortunate habits of the Colonel——"

"You forget, sir, that you are speaking to his daughter," said Winona, reprovingly. Then rising, she added, with a degree of hauteur she was seldom known to assume, "But we will pursue this subject no farther. No service can be accepted by any of my family, that is not rendered willingly." And, with a burning cheek and stately mien, she walked out of the room.

She passed into the parlor, where her father was sitting, in a fit of gloomy abstraction, his head resting upon his hand. He looked up as she approached.

"Well?" he questioned, in a hesitating, nervous manner.

"I fear, sir," said Winona, with a show of calmness that she did not feel, "it will not be in our

power to meet the demands of Muckridge, without a sale of this estate."

"And render you a beggar!" he exclaimed. "Oh! my poor, poor girl! what misery has the folly of your father brought upon you!" and covering his face with his hands, he wept like a child.

"Yet not so bad as that, after all," he added, in a few minutes, with forced calmness. "You, at least, are provided for. Cortlandt has a pleasant home to take you to, when this shall be gone.

"No, my father," she answered, throwing her arms around his neck, and kissing him as she used in her more girlish days. "Your home shall be mine, wherever it is. And if we lose this, we will together seek happiness in some humbler one."

XVI.

A GOOD SPIRIT EVOKED.

As I have said, the affair of the mortgage had been kept from the knowledge of Mrs. Remsen by her husband, and the first intimation she received of it was from Winona, who thought no one could break it to her mother as gently as she could. But, with all her gentleness in the execution of her mission, the effect produced by her information, was, for a few moments, truly alarming. Mrs. Remsen had been for some days ill, and her nerves, which had been greatly

shaken off late, were in a state easily to be acted upon, and this news, so unexpected, and so painful in its nature, brought on one of those violent fits of hysterics to which she had unfortunately become too subject. But this passed off, after a plentiful shower of tears, and a calm succeeded.

"Oh! Nony! Nony!" she then said, "why did your father keep this from me?"

"My dear mother," returned Winona, caressingly, "it was kindly meant."

"Kindly meant, perhaps, but not wisely done. I knew he was somehow mixed up in that foolish speculation, which brought so much misery upon some very worthy people twelve or fifteen years ago, but, as he never complained of any loss by it, I thought no loss had been sustained, and did not trouble myself any further about it. But I should have known there was something wrong, when a man like Colonel Remsen, not only stooped to a show of intimacy with such a creature as Muckridge, but could suffer you, my child, to submit to a companionship with Muckridge's daughter. Had he but given me his confidence, past humiliation and present suffering might have been avoided."

"Dear mother," asked Winona, timidly, "did my father ever deny you his confidence, or did he only keep from you that which you never sought?"

"Do you think, girl," asked Mrs. Remsen, sharply in return, "I could have *begged* it of him?"

"Certainly not, mother; but you could have won it from him."

"Perhaps I might," said Mrs. Remsen, after a pause of a few moments, and speaking to herself rather than to her daughter. "For the estrangement that has, unfortunately, grown up between us, I may have been as much to blame as he. This is something I have never thought of. But," she added, rousing herself, "this is a time for action, not for vain regrets. Something must be done to save your father's credit, and to save Mont Claire."

"O that something could be done!" exclaimed poor Winona, clasping her hands. "But what can? Cortlandt Glenthorne"—she hesitated.

"What has he proposed?" asked her mother quickly.

"Nothing."

"That was easily done. Well, when no one will help us, we must try to help ourselves. I think the daughter of René Dupuy may still find some friends among those who knew her father. I will try, at any rate, if there be any such in New York."

"And what then, mother?"

"Why, I will see if their friendship will not provide me with the means to pay off this mortgage you speak of."

"But, mother, it is for nearly twenty thousand dollars," said Winona.

"And Mont Claire is worth more than thrice twenty thousand dollars. Shall we see our beautiful home fall into the hands of this upstart Muckridge, sooner than make an effort, and perhaps a little sacrifice of pride, to save it? No, my child, no. You do not

know your mother, if you think she would shrink from anything, not disgraceful, to save those she loves from ruin."

The spirit of her nation was stirred in the heart of the Frenchwoman, and her excited feelings now vented themselves in, what Americans would call, a slight fit of heroics.

"I will get myself ready at once," she resumed, "and go down to New-York in the first boat that passes, which will be in about two hours."

"But you are ill, mother, and need some one who will attend to your comforts," urged Winona. "Let me go with you."

"No, my dear, your father needs your care more than I do. Look closely to him, my love, for as I must take Mem, he will require some one near him who will not neglect him for a moment. Ellen will be of more service to me, at present, than you, so send her to me, that I may give her some directions."

I obeyed her summons, and received her orders. My preparations were easily made; and I then returned to assist Winona in putting up what was necessary for one of Mrs. Remsen's usual habits and present health. While doing this, Mrs. Remsen said to me,

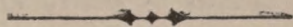
"Did you not tell me, Ellen, that the lad Nagle, who left here many years ago, and whom Colonel Remsen recommended to his cousin Van Wyck, has risen to considerable distinction in his profession, and succeeded to the old gentleman's business?"

"I did, ma'am."

‘ Well, I’ve been thinking, Ellen, that this young man might be of great service to us, in the business we are going upon. I do not mean in the way of advancing the sum I require, that, of course, he cannot do of himself, but in giving us advice how to proceed in the matter. Of this I cannot be expected to know much, and you, my good Ellen, I do not think can know a great deal more.”

“Indeed, ma’am, of such matters I know nothing; and, though I have not seen Florence Nagle for more than twelve years, yet from his letters, if his hand does not belie his heart, I think I know him as well as if we met every day in the week, and, if he can serve you, I am sure he will. That he can serve you I have not the least doubt.”

In one hour after, we were on board of one of the “floating palaces” of that day—how unlike the same class of vessels of the present time—and steaming our way down the Hudson.



XVII.

CHANGE.

EXCEPT for a few hours, just before the close of the river, the first season I was with the Remsens, when I was enabled to redeem my promise of the doll to Jerusha Ann, I had not been in New York since the time I was ordered out of it by Dr. Morton,

and, as soon as I had got Mrs. Remsen comfortably situated for the night, in the City Hotel, then *the* Hotel of the city, I ran out, to give my old friends, Oonah Gillespie, and her daughter Rose, what I believed would be an agreeable surprise. But, bless your heart! I might have looked until this time, without finding the house I was in search of, although I thought I could go straight to it with my eyes shut. Not a vestige of it remained, nor of the row of neat wooden houses to which it belonged, but, in their stead, were towering brick buildings, that could only be occupied by persons of princely fortunes.

While I stood, in doubt which way to turn, a little boy passed, and, accosting the child, I asked if he could direct me to Harman street.

"Harman street," he repeated. "Harman street. I guess, ma'am, there an't any such street in the city. At least, I've never heard tell of it."

"Indeed! Can you tell me, then, what street this is?"

"O yes, ma'am. This is East Broadway."

"East Broadway," I said to myself. "There was no such street in my time. Well, as everything else changes, why should not names change too? This, after all, may be the street I wished to find. Do you know any one, my little fellow," I continued, addressing the boy, "by the name of Nolan in this neighborhood?"

"Do you mean the Alderman?"

"No, my dear. The man I mean used to keep a grocery."

"I don't know, ma'am, whether he ever kept a grocery, though may be he did;—but he's now in business in South street. This is the Alderman's house, ma'am, just where we're a standing." And so saying, the boy passed on.

The house before which I stood was a very handsome one;—too handsome, I thought, to be the residence of the James Nolan I had left doing a small business, in a small house, in a poor neighborhood; yet, by the light of a very large lamp that stood in front of it, I could plainly read the name of "JAMES NOLAN" engraved on a handsome brass plate on the door. At any rate, if not the James Nolan I was in search of, he might be able to tell me something about him, so, plucking up a spirit, I mounted the broad stone steps, and rang at the door.

A smart female servant answered my ring.

"I am looking," said I, "for a Mr. Nolan, who married the daughter of a Mrs. Gillespie, about fourteen or fifteen years ago."

"The Alderman's not in," said the girl, "neither is Mrs. Nolan, but the old lady is. Just step into the back parlor, if you please, and I'll call her."

I did as she desired; but even before the old lady made her appearance, my doubts were dispelled, for, in a heavy gilt frame over the marble mantel-piece, was the portrait of a lady, clothed in silk, and wearing around her neck a thick gold chain, in whose broad, good-humored face, I recognized at once the features of my kind old friend, Oonah Gillespie. Here was a change, indeed. But it was only in ex-

ternals; for there was no change, as I soon learned, in the affectionate nature either of Oonah or her daughter Rose, notwithstanding the wonderful change which a lucky speculation—wisely improved—of the husband of the latter had made in their fortunes. Heaven bless their kind and honest hearts! the unchangeable goodness of two such creatures as these, might well atone for the selfishness of a whole generation of Muckridges and Sheehans.

XVIII.

AN OLD FRIEND.

THE next morning, before it was time for Mrs. Remsen to call upon her friends, I went out to seek Florence Nagle, whom I found occupying very handsome rooms in Wall street. I had expected to find him changed; but certainly was not prepared for the change that time had wrought in him since last we met. He was then a slight, delicate, and extremely shy lad, whose manner, among strangers, was scarcely one degree removed from downright awkwardness. The gentleman who had risen upon my entrance, was rather above the middle height and well proportioned, and though his face could boast but little color, its paleness was rather that of thought than of ill health, while his manner had the ease of one who had mingled freely with the best society. The Florence

of Stony Bottom was young when we parted, and looked even younger than he was, while the gentleman before me, who could not have been more than thirty, might easily have passed for forty at the least, owing, probably, to the loss of the hair that used to shade his temples.

He rose from a desk at which he had been writing when I entered, and advanced a step or two to meet me, thinking, no doubt, it was some new client who had come to pay him this early visit. But the step of courtesy was changed to a sudden spring, when, looking up into his face, I called him by name.

"Ellen," he exclaimed, taking my extended hand in both of his, "my wise and true friend, how glad I am to see you!"

Then hurrying me into an inner room, out of sight and hearing of his clerks, and seating me in a well-stuffed chair, sat himself immediately in front of me, and looked in my face with an expression of the sincerest pleasure.

"My dear Ellen," said he at length, "how well you are looking."

"And you," said I. "I little expected, when you left Stony Bottom, to see you the man you are now."

"Ah, I was then suffering from that worst of diseases—sickness of the heart; and to your prescription, under Heaven, my dear friend, I owe my cure. Had it not been for your advice, the talents, which I was, even then, conscious of possessing, would have been frittered away, in pursuit of an object not easy of attainment in this work-a-day world—literary distinc-

tion, until blighted hopes and broken health should produce their natural result—self abandonment—when the poor useless dreamer would be glad to find rest even in a nameless grave.”

“Then you have abandoned literature?” I said.

“Not at all,” he answered. “But, instead of an end, I regard it now only as a means; for, though an excellent cane, as has been happily said, it makes rather a poor crutch. It is still my companion in solitude and my comforter in affliction, and that day must be a busy one indeed, of which I cannot spare half an hour to the study of a favorite author, or in giving vent, through the medium of verse, to the thoughts and feelings that accompany me to my chamber, when I have left behind the cares and anxieties of the day. Truly may I say of literature, as Coleridge has said of poetry, that it ‘has been to me its own exceeding great reward,’ and the love of it has been the one star in the heaven of my existence, which no cloud has ever yet been able to obscure.”

“A little of the old spirit left, I find,” said I, laughing. “Yet there is another star, Florence, which, it seems to me, must even outshine this love of literature you speak of.”

“And that is——”

“Religion, or, if you will, the Love of God and of your neighbor.”

“Do not mistake me, Ellen,” he answered gravely. “If literature has been the star, religion has been the SUN of my existence;—filling with light the tangled

path of this world. Let me explain. When I first came to the city, though I had a large stock of religion—in theory, I had not a particle of it in practice; and in this state I remained for many months, losing, little by little, my theoretical religion, as I sank under the pressure of difficulties incidental to my situation, until a gloomy, unhoping scepticism entirely took possession of my heart. About this time I was taken ill; and as the small weekly stipend allowed me by Mr. Van Wyck was barely sufficient for my maintenance in health, and as I had no right to expect the continuance of it when I was no longer in a condition to earn it, with no prospect but certain destitution, and, perhaps, death by starvation before me, my scepticism changed rapidly into downright unbelief, and in my madness, I blasphemed against the Providence of God.

“My landlady was a poor, hard-working Irish woman, who made no pretensions to sentiment; but was not without the kindness natural to her sex; and pitying the loneliness of the poor sick boy in the garret, to whom she could devote but a few moments at a time, she often sent her little daughter to sit by me, and attend to my wants; and who, in the kindness of her innocent heart, would, when I was unable to sleep, endeavor to amuse me by the relation of the pleasant little fictions that had afforded so much pleasure to herself. Among these was one which, for the beneficial effect it had upon my desponding heart, I shall ever remember with gratitude. It is a simple thing; but, if you have no objection, I will read it

to you." So saying, he took from a drawer a neatly-folded manuscript, and, in a low earnest tone, read

"A tale of childish trust in God,
'Mid want and misery."

"This little story," continued Florence, "told by a child, had an effect upon me that the best written sermons had long failed to produce, and filled me with shame and compunction, for my guilty mistrust of the watchful care of Him who disregards not the fall of a sparrow, and earnestly did I pray to be relieved from the desolating spirit of doubt that had too long held possession of my heart. My prayer was heard; for, as if to confirm me in my resolution, of henceforth submitting myself to the Divine Will, I was that very day sought out by Mr. Van Wyck, who provided me with a physician and nurse, and every comfort necessary to one in my feeble state, and I was left no more to brood in solitude over a condition, which a vivid, but unregulated imagination, had brought me to regard as unprecedented in misery. I rose from my sick bed an altered being; and, by the aid of Heaven's grace, have ever since kept the path which I then resolved to tread."

XIX.

AN ALARM.

I NOW related to him the business on which I had come, and detailed, as minutely as my information would admit, every circumstance relating to the mortgage, with which, however, he seemed to be pretty well acquainted, having made for Muckridge a fair copy of the original.

"You see," I continued, "how matters stand. Twenty thousand dollars must be raised at once, or the beautiful estate of Colonel Remsen will be sold at public auction, to the ruin of his family, and, I much fear, the certain destruction of him, for such is the state of his mind at present, that any new excitement can hardly fail to drive him into madness. Mrs. Remsen has come to town to try, among the friends of her father, some of whom are merchants of high standing, to raise this money, for the re-payment of which a claim upon Mont Claire will be given for security. How is she to proceed?"

"By keeping from those friends all knowledge of this business," he answered.

"I don't understand you."

"Merchants, my good Ellen, notwithstanding their apparent means, never, or rarely, at any rate, have more money than the exigencies of business keep in constant demand, and such a thing as investing their

capital in a speculation of this kind, could not be thought of for a moment."

"But this is not a speculation."

"So much the worse; for, in that case, there can be no hope of the cent. per cent. profit they might ultimately reap. But do not be cast down. In discouraging Mrs. Remsen's application to her merchant friends, I do not mean to say, that the money cannot be raised from other sources. Indeed I think, nay, am sure, it can, and without Mrs. Remsen appearing in the matter at all, if she will only leave the management of it entirely to me."

"If she will? My dear Florence, she will be only too glad to do so."

"Well, then, to enable me to go to work understandingly in the business, it is necessary I should make my long purposed visit to Stony Bottom, to examine thoroughly into Colonel Remsen's title to the Mont Claire property. When do you return?"

"Why, as Mrs. Remsen must have some visits to make, of course, and I wish to spend one day, at least, with the friends of my girlhood, I do not think we can get away before the day after to-morrow."

"That will do. Go in the evening boat, and I will accompany you."

We went in the evening boat, as arranged, but, owing to some derangement of the machinery, which obliged us to lay to for nearly three hours, did not reach Stony Bottom Landing until near midnight, when, as the distance was little more than a mile, and the weather particularly fine, Mrs. Remsen, who ap-

peared in better spirits than I had ever seen her, proposed that, instead of sending Mem for the carriage, we should walk up to Mont Claire. And taking the arm of Florence, she set out to lead the way.

As we were so much beyond the time at which we should have arrived, I expected to find the family buried in silence and darkness. But, instead of this, I noticed, as we approached the house, signs of great confusion. The hall door was standing open, and persons, bearing lights, were rapidly passing through it in all directions. Aunt Neppy was the first we encountered upon entering.

"O Madam, Madam!" she exclaimed, wringing her hands, and weeping bitterly. "Master Schuy, the Colonel, Madam"—

"What of him?" asked Mrs. Remsen, in great alarm.

"O Madam, he's gone!"

"Gone where?"

"Clean off, Madam, clean off."

"Gone? Great Heaven! Where's Winona?"

"Gone too, Madam! Gone too!"

"Speak intelligibly, woman," said Mrs. Remsen, in a paroxysm of terror and alarm. "Where are they gone?"

"Ah, Madam, I don't know," answered Aunt Neppy, sobbing hysterically. "The Colonel ha'n't been himself since you went away; and poor Nony has been with him all the time, day and night. About two or three hours ago, while I was trying to make the dear child take a nice cup o' tea, that I had made

for her, with a very thin slice of toast, buttered on both sides, jist as she likes it, he started suddenly from the sofy where he'd bin a-lyin', and rushed out o' the back door, and Nony arter him. We've hunted all over for them ever since, but can't find nyther of them, high nor low."

"O Lod, O Lod!" exclaimed Agamemnon, rolling up the whites of his eyes, and turning almost pale, "*De Debil's Chimley! De Debil's Chimley!*"

"What do you mean?" I asked, as Florence bore Mrs. Remsen, who had fainted, into one of the parlors.

"O Miss Nelly," he answered, his teeth chattering all the while, "I've often heerd Mas'er, when he wa'nt 'zactly hisself, say, if he wanted to take a jump into t'oder wurl, he didn't know no place so good to start from as de Debil's Chimley, an' I tink him gone dar for to try it."

But, before we follow the fugitives, it is necessary I should give some account of what had happened in our absence.

XX.

IMPERTINENCE AND DESPONDENCY.

THE evening after we left for New York, Barney Sheehan came to Mont Claire, and spent half an hour or so with Laura Burdock, who, probably, was informed of the object of Mrs. Remsen's visit, for early

next day, the attorney of Muckridge called, and made a formal demand upon the Colonel for the payment of the money due his client, adding thereto a threat, that, if the sum named was not immediately forthcoming, the law against the debtor should be put in force that very day. The Colonel, from the time that the opinion of Cortlandt Glenthorne had been made known to him—that Mont Claire could not be saved—had sunk into utter hopelessness, and all the efforts of Winona, to beguile him into momentary forgetfulness of the coming evil over which he brooded, were entirely unavailing, until she gave up, as impracticable, every attempt at drawing him into conversation. But if she failed to rouse him, not so was it with the attorney; for scarce had he declared the purpose of his visit, than the sullen gloom of the Colonel was turned into maniacal fury, and, only for the interference of his daughter, he would have thrust, with very little ceremony, the man of law out of his house.

This frenzy, however, did not last long, and the gloom that followed was even more impenetrable than that which had preceded it; and thus he remained for the entire of that day and night, without tasting food, or closing his eyes for a moment in sleep, though frequently importuned by Winona and Aunt Neppy—one or the other of whom was with him all the time—to do both.

Towards noon of the second day, he became extremely restless,—walking almost incessantly backwards and forwards, only stopping for a moment to

look out of a window, or pausing at the door, as if he intended to go out, and uttering now and then words and sentences that conveyed no meaning to the mind of the hearer. It was evident that the senses of the Colonel had begun to wander, and Winona, becoming alarmed, requested Aunt Neppy to send Laura Burdock in to keep her company. But Laura Burdock was nowhere to be found; and it was soon ascertained, from one of the servants, that Laura had left the house early in the day, with the avowed intention of taking up her abode with Miss Jerusha Ann Muckridge, a fact that, in the course of the evening, was corroborated by the following letter, addressed to "Miss Remsen," and dated at "Rimini," the name given to the place that Muckridge had lately purchased, about half a mile to the east of Stony Bottom :

"*Ma chère Winona* : You cannot think the pucker I have been in, ever since I heard Mr. Glenthorne and pa speaking last evening, at the tea-table, of the probable sale of Mont Claire. Dear, sweet Mont Claire, in which I have passed so many delightful hours, to think of that being put up at auction, and knocked down, like a lot of old rubbish! Oh! *vraiment, ma chère*, it is too shocking! and my heart really bleeds, when I think of your distress, *ma mignonne*, at giving up your sweet little room, with its rose-colored furniture, of your amiable mamma's, in being obliged to take her tea out of a common cup, instead of her beautiful *Sèvres*, and your estimable, but unfortunate, pa's, in being compelled, perhaps, to blacken his own boots! *Mais, entre nous*, I have a little offer to make, that I hope will smooth down some of the difficulties in your way. *Mon cher papa* has kindly given up to me in this new house of ours—and a very beautiful house it is, I assure you—three handsome rooms overlooking the river. One of these I call my *bou-*

doir, in which you will find my favorite authors, and a few choice plants, that Mr. Glenthorne has been so kind as to present me with; the second is my dressing room, and the third my bedroom, and all three have blue furniture, because you know, my dear, that blue is said to become me exceedingly. But, besides these three rooms, there are two others that I may call my own, only one of which *malheureusement !* has a window, and that, quite as unfortunately, I have promised to Miss Laura Burdock, who, unwilling to put up with the impertinence of my old nurse, Ellen O'Donnell, has determined upon abandoning, for good and all, the home of her childhood, and coming to abide with me. *N'importe*, I still have the room without the window at my command, and I think, when the family is broken up, you will find it much pleasanter than one in a common boarding-house, and you will, by accepting it, render so happy

“Your ever true friend,

“J. A. MUCKRIDGE.”

The malice of this letter was not as well hidden as the writer intended; but it fell unheeded upon the heart of poor Winona, which was already too full of anxiety for her father to afford room for any minor grief. One thing only in it gave her pain, and that but for a moment. The circumstance named of Cortlandt Glenthorne quietly discussing, at the tea-table of Muckridge, the probable ruin of the father of his betrothed, while she—the betrothed—was doing all in her power to ward off the blow that was likely to unseat the reason of her father. Tears of indignation sprang to her eyes, but dashing them off, she exclaimed, with excusable pride,

“He that could desert me now, is not worthy of me. From this hour, Cortlandt Glenthorne, our paths lie asunder.”

"What of Cortlandt?" asked her father, for Winona had unconsciously spoken the last words aloud. "Does he say there is no help?"

"No, dear father, no. But help will come."

"Whence, girl, whence? When the earth is frozen hard, we look to the sun and the soft breath of spring to loosen its chains; when it is parched by the heat of summer, we look to the clouds to refresh it. My heart is frozen;—but where is the sun or the breeze to warm and to soften it? And O, my brain is drier than the parched earth in summer, yet there is no cloud in the heavens to drop its moisture upon it!"

"Dear, dear father! He who gives the sun, and the breeze, and the shower, to warm, to soften, and refresh the earth, will surely not leave us unaided in our difficulties. Let us only ask help of Him, and He will grant it."

"But how will you ask it?" he demanded. "You know no prayers but your mother's. Will He hear them?"

"Any prayer, father," she answered, "that truly comes from the heart." And kneeling by the sofa, on which he had then thrown himself, she breathed forth a short and simple prayer, that seemed to fall with soothing effect upon the disordered mind of the sufferer, for in a few moments he sank quietly to sleep.

XXI.

THE MANIAC.

THE sleep of the Colonel was short; and, unfortunately, Winona was absent when he awoke from it, having been prevailed upon by Aunt Neppy to go into the adjoining room for a cup of tea; and when she returned he was gone. Immediately giving the alarm, she rushed out after him; but, before the servants could be made by poor Aunt Neppy to understand what had happened, father and daughter had both disappeared. Winona, by finding open a door that led into the garden, had easily divined the path her father had taken, and by pursuing with a rapid step, overtook him just as he had got fairly out upon the northern road; while those sent out by Aunt Neppy went altogether in a different direction, and left the poor girl entirely unassisted.

"Father," said she, with as much calmness as she could command, for, besides being greatly frightened, she was almost out of breath, "you have forgotten your hat. Let us return and get it."

"No, no," said he, "I want no hat. My head is hot—burning hot—what should I do with a hat? I could not bear it. It would crush me with its weight."

"But, father," she pleaded, "the air is chilly, and I am without a shawl. You know I cannot walk out

in the evening without a shawl, or even a bonnet. Will you not go back with me for my bonnet and shawl?"

"Poor toad! poor toad! I am very sorry you are so cold. But come closer to me, my darling," and putting his arm around her, he drew her close to his side, "and let us walk fast, and you will soon be warm enough," and he set out almost upon a run.

"O father," she cried, "do not walk so fast. I cannot keep up with you."

"Well, I will not hurry it, the dear lamb. I know they will be waiting for us; but let them wait. There is a gay company, Nony, my pet, to which we are invited. I did not tell you of this before, because I wanted to surprise you; and you will be delighted with them, I know; but they must wait our coming—and they will—so do not hurry yourself. All in good time, love, all in good time."

"But if we are to go to this gay company, father, why do we not take the carriage? How will it look for Colonel Remsen and his daughter to be going on foot? Let us go back for the carriage."

"Hush, child, hush. Do you not know that I have given away horses, carriage, house, and lands to Muckridge, the man who used to keep a store in Stony Bottom? and next week I am going to learn to make baskets, like the mountaineers. Now what should a basket maker and his daughter do in a carriage? It would be such affectation!"

Thus talking, and hurrying his daughter forward, the Colonel pursued his course, while poor Winona,

upon whose mind the conviction had forced itself, that her father was indeed mad, listened in vain for any sound that would give her hope of assistance in restoring the maniac to his home. None came. The night wore on, and as the road, at all times an unfrequented one, took them farther from Mont Claire, the chance of meeting any person on whom she could call for help grew every moment less, and the dwellers, in the few houses they passed, were sleeping too soundly to be roused by any outcry she could make. The night wore one; and the distance between her and her home became every moment greater, and hope almost died in the heart of Winona, when, at the end of a three hours' walk, she found herself at the base of the DEVIL'S CHIMNEY.

"Now we have but to go to the top of this, girl," said her father, "and then we are at our journey's end."

"O father!" said she, falling before him and clasping his knees, "I cannot climb this ascent. Let us go home."

"Home? We have no home now but the home appointed for all living. Let us to it." And snatching her up, as if she had been an infant, he began to make the ascent with her in his arms; and she, with one short prayer for mercy, closed her eyes, and resigned herself to the fate that seemed inevitable.

XXII.

THE PURSUIT AND RESCUE.

BEFORE it could have been thought possible for Mem to get to the stables, he was at the door, with a pair of the Colonel's fleetest horses before a light wagon, in which he had thrown a quantity of hay and two or three blankets, and urged any one who had a mind to join him in pursuit of his master, to jump in at once, and let him be off.

"O Mem, Mem!" exclaimed Aunt Neppy, clasping her hands, "how I wish I dars't go with you! I'd go anywhere in the world for master Schuy and Winona, but I'm afeared of them horses."

"Well, stay you dar, you 'tarnal coward you," answered Mem, in high anger, "an' all on you what's afeared. Dis nigger kin go alone."

"No, Mem," said Florence, springing into the wagon. "I'll go with you."

"And I too," said I, holding up a hand to be assisted in, for I felt how much poor Winona would, at a time like this, require the presence of one of her own sex.

"Bless you for dat, Miss Nelly, bless you for dat," said Mem, almost blubbering, as he placed me comfortably in the wagon. "You a'n't like some old gals I knows on," looking at Aunt Neppy, "dat's afeared ob deir shadow. Go it now, my hearties," he

continued, giving whip to the horses. "You musn't let de grass grow under your feets dis night. Dat's it! dat's it! hooray!" And away we went at greater speed than I had ever travelled before upon land, but my confidence in the ability and carefulness of our driver, and intense anxiety for the fate of the fugitives, banished from my heart and mind every feeling and thought of fear.

It was a calm, clear October night, and the moon, which was now about the full, gave us almost as distinct a view of the objects around as if the sun had been shining upon them. But though we examined the road before us as far as our vision could stretch, no moving creatures appeared upon it, and I began to think that Mem had been mistaken in his conjecture, when, urging the horses forward, he shouted with frantic vehemence,

"Dar dey am! dar dey am! O Lod, O Lod! a'most to de berry top!" and he pointed to a tall dark object, about a quarter of a mile to our right, that did indeed, at that distance, very much resemble a chimney; and after looking earnestly for a minute or two, I saw something moving towards the top. My feelings at the moment are not to be described. The point of destruction was almost reached; and we, although so near, might, nay must be—when I thought of the difficulties of the ascent—too late to save the madman and his victim. My tongue was parched with the fever of fear, and, unable to articulate, I could only think a prayer.

But the terror of the moment magnified, as usual,

the dangers of it, imminent as they were. When we reached the base of the chimney, the Colonel, apparently almost exhausted, was yet some distance from the top, towards which he was toiling with his still insensible burthen, and the difficulties of the ascent were far less than I had anticipated, for the column, or rather bisected cone, was much larger at the base than the top, and while almost perpendicular from the river, was, as Aunt Neppy had very well expressed it, "slantindicular" from the land, and, as Mem and Florence were both well acquainted with it in their boyish days, they now ascended it with ease, and even rapidity.

I did not leave the wagon, for Mem, not waiting to secure the horses, had thrown me the reins, and I now sat watching their progress with intense anxiety. Up and up they went, side by side, the strong affection of the old man enduing the limbs of age with the vigor and elasticity of youth, and my heart leaped up exultingly as I saw them gain upon the Colonel. But the odds were so terribly against them. He was already within a few feet of the top, and they certainly not more than half way up; and, if he should become aware of their pursuit, nothing but Divine interposition could prevent the intended sacrifice. And he did, even as the thought passed through my mind, become aware of it. In a moment's pause he caught the sound of their approaching steps. He cast a glance behind, and then sprang forward. The summit is almost gained, and they—great Heaven!—are still even yards from it! I grew sick. I

wished to close my eyes to shut out the fearful scene—but could not; my interest in it was too exciting. I started to my feet, and in a voice of agony urged on the pursuers. My cry reached the ears of the Colonel, and he redoubled his exertions. But his very efforts were against him. He has made a misstep. He reels, and falls backwards, and is caught in the arms of old Mem! Oh! Heaven be praised!

Passive as an infant the maniac, now utterly exhausted, was borne, rather than led, down to the wagon by the faithful old slave, and laid upon the hay, while Winona, whom he had unhesitatingly resigned to Florence, and who had begun to give signs of returning consciousness, was wrapped in one of the blankets, and placed by my side. Then Mem, leaving the care of our return to Florence, sitting at the bottom of the vehicle, supported the head of his master, while that of Winona rested upon my bosom; and so, without one word of remark, or even of audible thanksgiving, we went slowly back to Mont Claire.

XXIII.

HAPPINESS RETURNS WITH CONFIDENCE.

IN a few short days Winona was seen about the house as usual; and, except that her cheek was pale, and her movements rather languid, no one would have supposed that anything out of the common order

of events had occurred to her. And even this paleness might very well have been, as I suppose it was, attributed to her attendance upon her father, whose temporary madness had been followed by so complete a prostration of his physical powers, that it was long doubted, by his medical attendants, whether they could ever again be made to rally, and at all times a constant watch at his bedside was kept either by Winona or her mother.

"Sweet are the uses of adversity," says one, who seemed indeed to know "all qualities with a learned spirit." While in the enjoyment of blessings denied to nine-tenths of the human family, Mrs. Remsen, with a perverseness peculiar to our fallen nature, had gone out of her way to seek occasions of unhappiness to herself and her family. She could hardly have been, at the time of her marriage, a stranger to the prejudices of her husband ; prejudices natural to one who claimed descent from a people who had suffered severely for their adherence to the form of Christianity they had seen fit to adopt ; yet, instead of endeavoring to soften them by persuasion, to correct them by showing that, while persecution for conscience sake had been practised by professors of every creed, it is no part of the spirit of any, or, which would have been far better than either, to labor to destroy them by that most convincing of arguments—the example of a Christian life ; her readiness to resent any remark which she thought levelled at the peculiarities of her faith, and to defend every act, however unjustifiable, that had been done in its name, even while she lived in open

neglect of all its precepts, only gave strength to the prejudices she so indiscreetly strove to combat, and almost alienated the heart which had at one time been all her own. There was also, as we have seen, another cause of estrangement between the husband and wife. When the difficulties into which he had involved himself first became embarrassing, the Colonel naturally looked for some friend to whom to confide the cause of his unhappiness. And where could he hope to find such a friend if not in his wife? But unhappily Mrs. Remsen, who could not have failed to perceive the change that had lately taken place in the manner of her husband, yet wholly ignorant of the cause, attributed it, perhaps naturally, to the decay of his affection, and instead of inviting confidence by a gracious demeanor, repelled it by the reserve in which she was pleased to shut herself up. Then who can wonder at the result? But when poverty menaced her idolized daughter, and the husband of her youth seemed almost within the grasp of death, the reserve vanished, and the energies of her nature, of which even she was until then unconscious, sprang into activity, and the petted child of Fortune, the admired woman of fashion, the mere creature of conventionality, rose at once into the woman of forethought, the affectionate wife, the kind, judicious, untiring nurse. "Sweet" indeed in her case had been "the uses of adversity."

But the doubts long entertained, though not expressed, by the medical men, began gradually to give place to hope, and what they believed to be the

triumph of skill over disease was shown in the increasing satisfaction with which they regarded their patient; and the unspoken fear that had lain heavily upon the heart of the wife and daughter, was lifted, little by little, until genuine smiles took the place of the simulated ones upon their faded cheeks.

"Dearest Claire," said the Colonel, one evening during his convalescence, "how strangely we have misunderstood one another."

"We have, indeed, Schuyler; but will misunderstand one another no longer. You must pardon the past, my husband, and I will endeavor, by my future conduct, to regain the love I so well deserved to lose forever," returned his wife with an air of humility which, little as she was accustomed to it, really became her admirably.

"Deserved to lose, Claire? Do not speak so reproachfully. For all the unhappiness we have suffered in the past, I alone am to blame."

"Well, well," said she smiling, and tenderly kissing his forehead, "we will divide the blame, and mutually endeavor to atone for it. You by withholding nothing from your wife that can give you a moment's uneasiness to conceal, and I by showing the interest I must always feel in anything that may concern your happiness; and thus, by uniting the broken link of confidence, we shall make strong the chain of affection that must ever bind us together."

From this time the health of the Colonel rapidly improved, and in a few weeks became thoroughly re-established. The evil habit from which so much of

his sufferings had proceeded, by aggravating an accidental, not hereditary, mental infirmity, having been broken by his long illness, was never after renewed, and his old age promises now to be as free from the ills "that flesh is heir to," as that of any other of my acquaintance. One great cause of this, however, is the ease in which it is likely to be passed. By the exertions of Florence, the money necessary to satisfy the claim of Muckridge against Mont Claire was raised, and by the course that he suggested, means were easily found to liquidate the debt thereby incurred, for when husband and wife entered with one heart into the scheme of retrenchment, it was found easy of accomplishment, and, in much less time than even the most sanguine had supposed, the estate of Colonel Remsen was free from every incumbrance.

XXIV.

CONCLUSION.

"WELL, things have turned out strangely, though, ha'nt they?" said Aunt Neppy to me one evening, about a year after my memorable ride to the "Devil's Chimney." "Who'd ha' thought a year ago that Mickey Muckridge—Old Money Bags, as I used to call him—then so stout and consequential, would be dead in sich a little time? Poor man! I didn't like him, to be sure, but, for all that, I was dreadfully

shocked at the death he got. Choked by a piece o' meat at his own table! Do you know, Nelly, some of them Irish in the village—I don't mean any disrespect to you, my dear—act'ally believe, 'twas a judgment upon him, for eating meat on Friday, when he called himself a Catholic? But you don't think so, I'm sure."

"I have not thought upon the subject at all," I answered. "Yet wiser people than *them Irish* might have come to the same conclusion. Muckridge was, unfortunately, one of a large class in this country, who profess to belong to a certain Church, and yet act in open defiance of her commands; and He who holds the lives of His creatures in His hands, may have chosen this means for the punishment of disobedience—for disobedience, even in what is, apparently, so small a matter as eating that which is prohibited, is certainly a sin."

"Well, I declare," said Aunt Neppy, "I never thought of it in that way afore. But who'd ever ha' thought of Cortlandt Glenthorne, with his high notions, offerin' himself to Muckridge's da'hter? I shall never forgive him for such a piece o' meanness."

"But remember, Aunt Neppy, before he did so, Winona had positively refused to have him."

"And right enough, too. When he found the poor gal adrift, didn't he leave her to paddle ashore as well as she could, and when he seen she got safe to land, and no thanks to him, didn't he then try to make it up with her? If Nony hadn't refused

him, I'd never ha' forgiven her, that's sartain. But Rushy Ann sarved him just right, after promisin' to have him, to run off with that pretended Polish Count—what's his name?—that she met at the Springs, but who turned out to be nothing but a black leg, arter all?"

"Count Zkrtchmyzwt."

"O, yes. Count Scratchmyeyesout. That was the nicest trick I ever seen."

"It was an unfortunate one for poor Jerusha Ann, I'm afraid. The handsome fortune left her by her father will soon be squandered by such a husband."

"Why, I don't think her fortin' was anything to boast on, arter all. You know, Kezi Potter, by bringin' for'ard a certificate, showin' that she was married to Muckridge years and years ago, proved her right to one-third o' the property, and Rushy Ann, much to her credit, sooner than let the world know what an old fool her father was, gin it up to her. But, O Nelly, my dear, what do you think they *do* say?"

"I have not the slightest idea."

"Why, that Barney Shin is goin' to be married to—who do you think?"

"Laura Burdock, perhaps."

"O, no. Poor Laura! how disappointed she must feel, to be sure. But it sarves her jist right. Here she'd always been treated like one o' the family, and jist for a little miff at you, because you happened to be a favorite, desarted her friends in their trouble. Why, he's act'ally goin' to be married to his brother's widder—Kezi Potter!"

"O, impossible!"

"May be so. But time'll show." And time did show the report to be true.

"Do you think, Nelly," resumed the old lady, after a silence of full five minutes, in which she had diligently plied her needles, "that people can *really* love more than onct?"

"I think it possible," I answered; "but as I have never loved at all, I am not a very good judge. Why do you ask?"

"Why I use to think Nony very fond of that Cortlandt Glenthorne. 'Twas but nat'ral! you know they were brought up children together;—and now she's goin' to be married to Florence Nagle."

"She was fond of him, no doubt, and for the very reason you have named—because they were brought up children together; and, if he had not divested himself of the high qualities with which her young fancy had endowed him, she might have gone on loving him to the end of her life. But when he appeared to her eyes as he really was, cold of heart and sordid of mind, the romance of affection was at an end, and with it the reality. Winona Remsen was not one to love where she could not esteem, and Cortlandt Glenthorne ceased to be more to her than an ordinary acquaintance. Then, when she began to feel the void in her heart that Cortlandt Glenthorne had filled, came Florence, who, besides winning her gratitude for the zeal with which he had labored in her father's service, was the actual possessor of the qualities which she had supposed to belong to her early com-

panion, and his image was set up in place of that which had been cast out; and so Florence Nagle—the *self-made man*—becomes the husband of the loveliest girl, and—thanks to his exertions—likely to be one of the richest heiresses in her native State.”

“ ’Tis all right, I dare say,” said Aunt Neppy, with a puzzled air, “but seems a little odd, for all that, I must confess. But for one thing I’m sorry, that’s sartain; and that is, that Nony is goin’ away to York to live. I a’n’t as young now as I used to be, and I’m very much afeared I shan’t see her again arter that.”

“Nonsense, Aunt Neppy. You will see her often. Of course she will every now and then visit Mont Claire; and besides that, she will expect you to spend some time with her in the city, to see to the arrangements of her new house.”

“What, trust myself to go to the city in one of them boats? Not for the univarse! There’s one thing, however, that I don’t rightly understand yet,” she continued, after a considerable pause. “How Master Schuy has made up his mind to go to Church with Madam and his da’hter so quietly as he does. I wonder what Mr. McClavers would say to it?”

“It does not matter much what Mr. McClavers, or any of his kind, would say, who, after having tried every form of Protestantism, became a Catholic for three months, and is now a Jew. But I suppose the Colonel has come to the conclusion, that if, in the Church to which his wife and daughter belong, salvation is to be found for them, it may also be for

him. And I think he is right. But how comes it, Aunt Neppy, that you go to Church with them?"

"Why, you know, my dear, the Church the Catholics have now is the one I have always been used to goin' to; and you wouldn't expect me to leave my own Church merely because the form of worship in it has been changed?"

This answer amused me a good deal, but when, a few years after, I saw in the memoir of an eminent statesman, just then deceased, a similar reason given for his joining in the religious observance of a people altogether different from those with whom he had at first united himself—that they occupied the Church he had attended from his youth up—I felt more respect for the simple reason given by Aunt Neppy. Poor Aunt Neppy! she did not long survive this conversation; for, in her eagerness to get at the particulars of a "Terrible Accident" which had lately happened, she would not wait to let the paper dry that contained them, and from that she took a cold that brought on an illness of which she died. Poor, kind Aunt Neppy!

Mem still lives; and almost the first sound that greets my ears, on my visits with Mrs. Nagle to Mont Claire, is that of the well-remembered *refrain*,

"Ho! ho! win' blow!
Who see corn grow?"

THE TABLET FOR 1873.

APPROBATION.

I am happy to state, concerning the **NEW YORK TABLET**, that I am pleased with its Catholic tone and spirit, and I feel persuaded that its present conductors will spare no pains to make it, in the future as in the past, a useful auxiliary to the Catholic cause, as well as a safe and instructive "Family Journal." As such, I think it deserving of liberal patronage on the part both of clergy and laity.

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